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GENRE-BENDING

I would like to throw my two cents in on the subject you recently addressed: correspondents that have been appearing in your "Letters" column lately. In a way, I think both arguments are valid.

On one hand, I agree that *FF* should not show any frontal nudity. *FF*'s purpose is to be much more than a "girls" magazine translation: a rag with countless cops, featuring only "suspense" anonymous models. I would like to think that your readers are also interested in the other dimensions of these remarkable women. By reading the articles, we get a good idea of their personalities, what makes them tick, etc., as well as gaining insight on their work, past and present. Besides, many of us find male photos of women—clad in swimsuits and lingerie—just as enticing.

On the other hand, I do not think you show enough of these really sexy photos. I noticed in recent issues that only about half the articles featured truly "hot" photos of ladies clad in scantily-clad outfits. Worse yet, in other articles, all we see are the ladies in very unsexy monster or alien makeup. I realize that many of your ladies are not willing to appear in skimpy bikinis or lingerie. Fear enough. For that, I would be content seeing them in as attractive dress or T-shirt and shorts. I'm not saying that every picture has to be like this. All I ask for is at least one per article. To paraphrase the words of your editor: "Let's not be hypocritical here. One of our main attractions is to show the physical attractiveness of our ladies"—or something like that.

Another reason I read *Female Frenzy* is to get the inside scoop on debating (so-called) B-movies, which are frequently cast with these actresses. I learn more about these movies in *FF* than I would anywhere else. For example, if it wasn't for *FF*, I never would have learned of *DINOBAUR ISLAND*. I checked it out, and it's now one of my favorite movies.

However, about the only major complaint I have about *FF* is that coverage of movies and TV is limited only to the non-B-movie/ horror genre. For example, your interview with Reginald Velty (*FF* 14) concentrated only on his sci-fi films, *ONE MILLION YEARS B.C.* and *PANTASTIC VOYAGE*, but you neglected his other films, e.g. *A SWINGING SUMMER*, *THE BIGGEST BUNDLE OF THEM ALL*, and, my favorite, *FATHERHOOD*. A more recent example is your article on Bridgette Wilson. She gained mainstream attention as the beautiful teacher in *BILLY MADISON*. However, your article only makes a brief, passing reference to that role. Apparently, you did not think she was worthy of attention until she did that on-B role in *MORTAL KOMBAT*. This makes me wonder how many other attractive former *feisties* are being ignored simply because their resume doesn't include a science fiction, fantasy or horror role.

I hope you will consider my criticism to be constructive. Please don't take this as a negative letter. I love *FF* and I'm grateful such a magazine exists.

Jim Layer
South Ridge, IL

LINNEA (FF 41)

I was a crew member on the ill-fated *FALLEN ANGELS-BLOOD CHURCH* project (*FF* 33) in Columbia, OR. Most of the crew and I were working for no more than college course credit. When I found out I would be working with Linnea Quigley, my guess I may have had about long hours, no money, and the general harassment of the script were magnified a great way. Linnea was an absolutely professional and friendly presence on this dysfunctional set. Of course, I had a sillyboy crush on her, and tried to express her by performing "Sweet Transvestite" from *THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW*, in which I was performing on weekends. She received it en-



A sample of Quigley's backstage second glimpse in a forthcoming *FF* Linnea feature. However, has been cast in *BLOOD JUSTICE*.

thusiastically, and we even corresponded for a couple of months. Then, between my classes and her marriage, we lost touch.

A couple of years later, I wrote a letter to her, assuming she would have forgotten me. To my surprise, she sent me an early prototype of her book *Shin*. And last year, when I visited L.A. on a job search, I took a stab at calling her office to see if I could meet her, figuring that like my job hunt, nothing would come of it. To my surprise, she called and my call personally, albeit with I was out on my rounds. Guess the luck!

In short, Linnea Quigley is one of the kindest, most genuine people people on the planet, let alone in Hollywood. I will never forget how special she has made me feel, and when I multiply that by the probability factor of how many other fans there are like me, it makes me realize just how giving she is. When I realize my dream of making films, there will always be a part somewhere for her. Thank you for a terrific profile of a terrific woman, and thank you, Linnea, for so many great memories.

Mark Edward Hawk
Columbia, OR

LESBIAN VAMPIRES

I write you in other one, having read Bryan Stevens' piece on "Alternative Lifestyle/The Lesbian Vampire" (*FF* 41). Now, where have I read such a retrospective, even though the literary history is as readily apparent, a B-movie actress has managed to outdistance most scholars of English Lit. in wit and enlightenment. Now that my subscription order is on the way, I have every reason to believe that future issues of your magazine will be just as enjoyable.

A suggestion I do have is this: why not list a directory for the lesbian pictures mentioned in your articles? Stevens' coverage cited several movies that I can't locate from rentals or retailers. I've recovered *VAMPIRE LOVERS* and *LUST FOR A VAMPIRE* from a prominent video mail order house, and I've found *SEXUAL OUTLAWS* in a local rental store.

Though I viewed *TWINS*

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FAN CLUBS

Send self-addressed and stamped envelopes:
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Linnea Quigley: Order her books, *Pin Suckling* and *Star As I Can* (\$15.95) and *Shin* (\$20), from Drexel's Publishing, P.O. Box 869, Centerville, Illinois 62503

Cynthia Rothrock: 2413 Lincoln Boulevard, #103, Santa Monica, California 90405

Jill Strain: Her photo, lavishly illustrated photo book, *Jill Strain: It's Only Art If It's Well Done*, is available for \$24.95 (See page 63)

Jane Williams: c/o 1023 North Howard Street, Glendale, California 91207

F A T A L E

Implying relations always want to know what a woman with an interesting figure Schilling (FF 137) The answer, plenty Schilling's second novel, "rooted in the fantasy realm," may premiere in April '86 (It's doubtful if there is any scheduling conflict with RUMBLE-SCILLING: our depiction of the faty tale as a family film). Still untitled, the book "was originally conceived as a screenplay titled DARK WORLD," is sequel to Schilling's Saturn-winning movie GOLDKAKER "but I reimagined the premise and added new characters." The plot? "Let's just say it involves a fair-weather experience" she grins. "I'll keep you posted." Just one more thing, a paperback edition of Schilling's debut book, Sacred Prey, will be concurrently released with the hardcover edition

of novel 82.

■SPECIES Introduced audiences to Melissa Henstridge which said—decided—with considerable understatement—is to 1985's Terrence Lewis. But FF's sister Richard Dinkoff made the 12 1/2 hrs.—thus far—been denied exposure to an equally potent icon. Released overseas in 1983, DELLAMORTE DELLAMORTE—a book satirized that Dinkoff describes as "night of the living DEAD movie's TWIN PEAKS"—offered scorchy Anne Parillo as impulsive characters. "We've seen the Michele Sordani film in Japanese (translating) (initially titled DEMONS '85 to capitalize on the profitable DEMONS movies produced by Deno Argento). Dinkoff's post collaboration with Argento prompted the phony "sequel" non-sequency—and we gotta admit that Parillo provides a sexy, classical beauty and disarming sensuality. Not unlike Henstridge, we'll reserve judgment on Parillo's talent until a more challenging role tests her aptitude, but in the meantime we'll be in the land of the Parillo Revolution by grace as a FF cover woman. By the way, it appears that DELLAMORTE DELLAMORTE's proposed dramatic release, as GENEVIEVE HAN, has been slated at July, but American audiences are not only deprived of Parillo, but a curious hybrid of gallow humor and surrealism: the film's aesthetic change of venue onto the post-tales of Jacob/Fred/Michael.

■Opening of SPECIES in the first scene that requires the then strange to wear only a natty corset—she reveals not only her anatomic charms, but a continuity error, note that Henstridge is shapely 34—created and released in a laboratory environment—was released with complete success (an issue that Henstridge performs the remainder of her nude scenes sans her love). Obviously body makeup was applied to "fresh-out" the fat (I doubt there was a deficiency of voluptuous for the job).

■Donald F. Gluck's DINOSAUR VALLEY (SHE'S in post production) but merchandising deals have already been negotiated. Gluck's second is cutting a soundtrack on the movie (Thomas Mares, who has composed music for Fox's animated BATMAN series, wrote the film's score). Lunar Models is producing the movie's sequel (which breaks as model kits and a San



Henstridge in the flesh, though this feature article is touting the mystery, Henstridge prefers to shroud this "mystery appearance" in mystery.

Diego company will offer a gal of looking cards. A behind-the-scenes documentary has been edited to three different running times, one of which may wind up on the film's limited release. Gluck notes: "It's very possible that we'll be shooting a sequel before the end of the year."

■Last issue, we reported that Terrie Roberts was cast in Don Fierman's "sexy horror thriller," VIGILANT 1986. However, as film was loaded into the cameras, Roberts was replaced by Margaux Hemingway. But before leaving, Terrie Roberts made one demand: Not a word saying "I was going to play Lisa," explains J.J. North, better known to genre addicts as the character in ATTACK OF THE 50 FOOT CENTERFOLD. "But Terrie insisted on doing the role, because the character is more reserved and timid than the acid women who are accustomed to playing. I was cast as Sarah, who's a much more self-centered woman. Margaux played the exotic thriller material (BRIGHT EYES 3 SECRET SASS), so would up in the role originally written for Terrie. Initially, Henstridge and Terrie appeared in a 1982 movie called ONE OF US (Terrie North who recently shot a "small

scene" with Neil Patrick Harris in ANIMAL ROOM, has also been cast in SLEAZEBALL. "It's an action film that takes place in a Texas desert." During the month of August, North will be shooting SHAM OF PLEASURE in FF's hometown Baltimore, Maryland. The "steamy sex 4 suspense" involves a computer virus that turns itself into a tangible entity—specifically, the gorgeous J.J.

■August 7th phone call from Linnea Guigley. "I'm in Italy to secure production on FATAL FRAMES," Guigley, who shot the Italian horror film more than a year ago, summarized the plot and her behind-the-scenes trouble in FF 41. "The film was never really completed, as I'm back on location," she explained. "We're shooting the 'last' ending which I can't reveal. Sorry! Donald Pleasence, Guigley's co-star died before production had been officially released. I have no idea how we're going to shoot around him. Let's just say a reward is pretty irrevocable." Between prior releases Guigley is involved with the development of Paul H. Sluff's HILLTOPS OF THE LIVING DEAD model (a sculpted replica of his "Frank" character) and working on a black





Supporting Jenna Roberts in *SLUG OF GLORY*, Venice Parent played Roberts as star of *SCUBA 2000*

and white soapbobs that may do but next year "But it's a premier pool" he replies. "In producing a film with Steve Linnane, who directed me in *JACKO* and *DEATH SQUAD*, [he] was talking with a concept that is very action oriented."

The habitually congenial Outley is tuffing over "my [a streamer] at this year's *Famous Monsters* convention in L.A. They don't pay my fee, we're not taking here about anything significant. Just stuff like parking, food and refreshments for my backup engine. One of the convention's sponsors so violently pushed me across the floor—and I have no idea why—that I had to go to a physical therapist. Taking me around all of the conventions is as intended through the years. I've never worked too hard and have never been treated to badly. The guys who organized the shenanigans so threatened to only really irritate things about me in *Famous Monsters magazine* [what? You mean the *F&M* is still publishing?]

■ Venice Carport, profiled in *FF* 11, came out of retirement for a low-budget, snuff-style hit called *FREAKSHOW*. The actress was featured in "The Unlabeled Guest," a segment ripe with Heinrich

horror, albeit home via the Victorian fence of the settings and weapons—not to mention the casting of Curran as a former *Film* vet even. *ORACULA HAS BEEN FROM THE GRAVE*, FRANKIE STEINMAUS RE-DESTRUCTION 7 had a great time! Enthusias Carren, who shot her scenes in one day, "I just got the flow and walked through the scenes two or three times, and hoped to get it in the first take." The beautiful blonde portrays a governess who is slain by her repressed niece, the latter infamously "liberated" by a military agent. "The costumes were as good as any I had at home," continues Curran. "The film was shot in Columbia, South Carolina and, of course, I live just off the coast." William Cooke and Paul Telford, who shot directed and screenplay credit, previously collaborated on 1994's horror anthology *CAMP FIVE TALES*. "They wanted to make about 'adultery' notes Carren. "Although [it] was in charge of camera, he was so much a director as an actor. Paul was just watching around making sure everybody was ready for a shot. But they seemed to be totally in tandem."

■ Steve Caruso, publisher of *Vampirella* and *Monstress* Classics, is embodying their female feline with a new *Brash* or *Black* model. Back in '89, he revived the former Warren Publishing heroine (1970-1980) in a black and white, four-issue miniseries called *Vampirella: Mooning in America*. The publisher hired two models, L. Avery Corbell and Cathy Grist, to slip on *Vamp's* devilish costumes for personal appearances on the east and west coasts, respectively. Harris subsequently returned Curran as their sole representative, and Goldberg found as his pet original character. "I had to be," he said, but year Curran abandoned the editorial duties and took part in leather boots to pose as *Maximum Force* covergirl, "Angelina."

February 1997 New York City: The *Vampirella* vacancy prompted an open-audition casting hundreds of applicants to audition for the film role. The winner was unveiled at Manhattan's Comic Book Bazaar/Convention on February 25. So who is the 1997 *Vamp*? He's former *Star Trek* Morris production coordinator and retail promotions director for *Harley* would only refer to the new to out as a person. "She's very excited about being *Vampirella*," says Morales. "She knows the comic, and is much more confident than the previous model." And she has been a welcome guest at com-

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F E M A L E

Slugs On Line is a PHANTASMAGORIA, scheduled to debut in late summer, is likely to be the most lavishly produced multimedia chapter ever again on CD-ROM. Comprised of 7 CDs, the premise involves a youthful married couple who move into the mansion of a 19th-century illusionist, but their lives take turns into bloodshed. Optical effects are furnished by Kinross, the unit that designed the digital effects for *BATMAN FOREVER*. And there's a fully orchestrated soundtrack with a 120-piece choir. But what significantly separates *PHANTASMAGORIA* from other games on the market? The leading character, with whom the player shares a communal existence, is a female (specifically, actress Verónica Marsell, who has recently appeared on Fox sitcoms). States-year-old Slugs, has presented what is also in traditional order format, the company's *RING 5 QUEST V*, which debuted in '98 was the first game to offer a female protagonist as the pivotal character. "I had family gamers tend to be younger men," explained one executive. "We're optimistic that *PHANTASMAGORIA* will cross over and draw women into the action." Roberts, concerned, the game's designer conceptualized a new twist: "To help those people who might be a bit more squeamish than others, the player can make a choice between an equivalent *FF* rating, or a softer equivalent PG-13 rating. There's also a 'parental protect' option for parents who do not want their younger teenagers to use the equivalent *FF* version. Under no cir-

cumstances, incidentally, is this game most appropriate for children under 13."

■ Plan clubs for J. J. North (*FF* 3-10) and *FF* staffer Tina Glavine Berg will be connected with their active promotional technology developed by Michael Tagliaventi, creative director of Atlantic Graphic Images. Tagliaventi is also helming a separate CD-ROM games, "each rooted in science fiction," for multimedia North and Berg. "I've just turned into a corporation," explains Tagliaventi. "I called the Ministry of Information. The division that handles interactive entertainment is Melvin Dog News Media, and Atlantic Graphics does the designs." J. J. North's game is very easy (relatively snail)—I did scores of the prototype. Tina's game—tentatively titled *THE GUARDIAN*—has a different personality. It's more a very driven woman, she's the commander of a spaceship. But it's easy. Atlantic Graphics designed the form-fitting costumes, which are made of rubber. Grande, who worked with Tina before, was a garment designer for Frederick's of Hollywood. Tina, who's contributing to the script, will play the protagonist and J. J. will guest star as the antagonist. For further info, write Atlantic Graphic Images, P.O. Box 980006, Boston, Massachusetts—02198-0006.

■ With *Grand*, the erotic thriller film reviewed for this issue, recently wrapped *BLUR HEAD* is an interactive CD-ROM game," notes Green. "Very lavishly produced, it plays a murder suspect while persuaded to give a full, I think the goal of the game is to date of the suit leader and solve a murder. I'm a little fuzzy about all of this, because you never get a film script. Why? It's cause the vintage CD-ROM script is a 1,500 pages long and character all of the 'inner' and 'outer' options for each challenging situation. Anyway, the game is tied in with *GOVERN M.E.*, a movie starring Carver Benson and Clark Gable. It's fairly like a speculation (I suggested) that *BLUR HEAD* will game an adult rating. "There is really" notes Berg, "but the scenes—including one that features myself—are performed on location. Personally, I think this is all time for a CD-ROM game or any other medium. Better to be interactive—and play the game at home with your wife—than to risk AIDS."

Does named her *SAG* (and she's *PHANTOM'S FINGER PALACE*, an

Access *FF* reader Tina Glavine Berg is *THE GUARDIAN*, an interactive CD-ROM game





Tanya Roberts converted from Bette's old job to "TOURIST TRAP" as SHARON'S ANGEL, in another thriller romp. As star of *THE PANDORA PROJECT* (below, w/ Barry Corbin), Roberts adapted to "late 1980s" sets (C) utilized for CD-ROM discs.



interactive game produced by Philips. "I say Gonzalez is Pansy girl. It is a couple of different scenes. It can be tough acting on sets geared for the CD-ROM. For one thing, you're leaning on imaginary furniture. The ornate furnishings you see on the screen aren't visible to the actors; the props and colorful backgrounds exist only on a monitor, and are computer-generated on to the picture during post production. The game was shot against green screen surfaces; each actor's marks were fitted green to blend in with the background."

■ Last issue, we reported on *Academy PANDORA DEVICE*, the latest active CD-ROM sequel to *UNDER A KILLING MOON*. The latest developments... well, the title has been changed to *THE PANDORA PROJECT*. Tanya Roberts portrays Megan Madison, who's "fascinating, beautiful and harder to figure out than a long hot form." An *Access* reviewer described Roberts as "personable and handy" as person to work with and a real professional. It took her a short time to adjust to shooting with no camera and against a blue wall. "Once she got the hang of it, Tanya did very well." Other cast members include *NORTHERN EXPOSURE*'s Barry Corbin. In addition to all 8 stars, Kevin McCarthy (*INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS*) and John Agar (*TRANTULA*). One goal of the game is assessing computer components into a computer Pandora Device; the computer transmits a holographic image of its interior (hologram) inside in the game. By government agents who enlightens the player to a preserved spacecraft and its alien technology. Here, sounds like *THE X-FILES* meets *ROGUE AM DEADLY* meets *GLASSHELM* and *THE PIT*. The player develops a symbiotic relationship with private dick Tex McQuay, who—in another sequel—



Tanya Roberts and Barry Corbin testing scenes on *THE PANDORA PROJECT*. Both actors have years of experience in the film.

Butler out a lounge singer's sister and subsequently earns the coveted salary's trust. "Yes, it's 2042 and you're shooting in post World War II San Francisco. There are three narrative paths and depending how you choose to move through the story are different endings. And so of the 20 pivotal characters are female. The game will maintain an average in early 1990s."

■ Just as this issue was heading completion, we received a CD-ROM adventure titled *MIDNIGHT STRANGER*. This one, cast with unknown actors, is rated "18+." (Adults Only). The language is so sexually profane that *Game Technology* is the only in a pair of Stereo headphones with each purchase, thus preventing sensitive ears from the stereotypical audio. But the game doesn't come on "cheap thrill" voyeurism. The premise: randomly plugged in the national radio of a "gritty film environment." You interact with 18 scenarios. Meet the Gay God (The Master's Thesis is an excellent

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NICOLE KIDMAN TO DIE FOR

THIS SUMMER, SHE WAS BATMAN'S BEAU; THIS FALL, THE ALLURING AUSSIE FLARES UP AS A FATAL BOMBSHELL.

By SAMANTHA DE SILVA

Flying her trade as a criminal psychologist, Dr. Chase Meridian navigates explorations into the dark side of romance. Her latest profile—a guy whose sexual preferences include black rubber muscle suits, a great big cape and mask with tall, pointy ears—is likely to be no piece of cake. **BATMAN FOREVER's** crusader (Val Kilmer) is as smitten with Nicole Kidman's shrink that he offers an assistance when Kidman punctures his virginal shield, that's right, she's the first to plant a kiss on the superhero's partially camouflaged face.

"And it was fun to be the first one to kiss Batman with his mask on," declared the laughing Kidman. "Poor Val—I wore that red lipstick through the whole thing. And they'd keep saying, 'You can't smudge her lipstick!' And Val would be like, 'But I don't know how to kiss a woman and not smudge the lipstick.' And I'd say, 'Oh, forget it, forget it, I'll take it



off.' So that was funny. They have this assistant now for lipstick so the lipstick doesn't come off. It tastes really bad."

Kidman admits that her casting as Batman's beau is the "easiest role I've ever gotten in a movie." She didn't have to audition nor negotiate; instead, she was pitched the part over the phone. After all, Chase Meridian was a welcome change of pace for the actress, who looked forward to playing opposite Kilmer, an actor she had admired for years. "Usually I've had to go after roles and pursue them and know they're being offered to somebody else," she relates. "For me, it hasn't always been really easy to get roles. So this one came the easiest. I'd just done a film prior to this, **TO DIE FOR**, which had been extremely exhausting. I was working every day and it was a very psychologically strange character that I had to really research to understand. So then to do something like **BATMAN**, which is basically comic book fun,



Movie: BATMAN FOREVER "was the easiest role I've ever gotten in a movie," quips Diaz on *YO* 100's exclusive psychopaths. The dark comedy was *bat* of this year's *Golden Furies*



was kind of a nice contrast to do in the same year." Following **TO DIE FOR**'s positive reception at the Cannes Film Festival, Columbia Pictures bumped the film from the competitive summer season and rescheduled it for a September debut.

Just Schumacher, director of **HATHAWAY**, evoked a relaxed atmosphere on the set and Radman indulged in the fun. But she would prefer to act out roles as the "squeener" and tackle larger-than-life characters. "I would love to have to work a stunt," Radman exclaims. "I want to be a villain! I didn't want to be Catherine because Michelle [Pfeiffer] did that so well. But it was fun to find the other side to Glenn, who is attracted to the darker side of life." Radman was equally intrigued by the script's ménage-a-trois, specifically "the idea that there is a love triangle, but it's between two people."

Radman was only slightly familiar with Bateman's greatness prior to making the film. "I had to go and look at the Bateman movies and the series. I've now actually become a fan of the Arkham *Anybody* comic books [D.C. Comics], which are fantastic. They're like pieces of art. And the images in them are so interesting and dark and intriguing."

Pursuing a personal interest in the dark side of life, Radman is fond of

LAST **TO DIE FOR**'s splashiest scene. **Below:** The actress in costume. **Close** inspiration for **WILL HATHAWAY**.



"I wanted to be a villain, though not Catwoman—Michelle Pfeiffer did that so well. But it was fun to do my character, who's drawn to the darker side."

"black comedies and satire." When asked for her favorite film, she replies, "DOCTOR STRANGELOVE." She sweetly grins, recalling Stanley Kubrick's comedy of errors that concludes in world annihilation. We backtrack to Kidman's own shot at gallows humor, TO DIE FOR. Directed by Gus Van Sant (DRUGSTORE COWBOY), she portrays a TV weather reporter who trades in perkiness for a homicidal streak. Louderer predicted that BATMAN FOREVER would elevate Kidman to the same high profile bracket shared by Sandra Bullock and Julia Roberts. But the film's trailer short-circuited the prophecy. Kidman's footage was almost trivialized, as scenes that stressed hardware, pyrotechnics and Jess Catterly's Buddler. But TO DIE FOR seems a sure bet, matching Kidman with a femme fatale flair for torchy tongue-in-cheek capriciousness, a trademark moved in high-budget Hollywood fare. Matter of fact, Kidman's coquettish drillery has been more often manifested in unpretentious, economy-conscious films and her personal, off-camera dialogue.

A native of Australia, Kidman studied ballet as a child and enrolled in drama school at age 10. Four years later, Kidman made her film debut in the Aussie production of BUSH CHRISTMAS and conquered her adolescent years in drama. As a teen, she auditioned for roles at St. Martin's Youth Theatre in Melbourne, the Australian Theatre for



Kidman, as a victim-turned-provoker, in DRUG CALM. The 1990 thriller turned the Aussie actress into a global celebrity.

Young People and Sydney's Philip Street Theatre. A national poll rallied around the 17-year-old teenager, naming Kidman as Best Actress of the Year (1985) for her performance in Kennedy Miller's series, VIETNAM. Subsequently cast in the stylish thriller DRUG CALM (1989), she earned recognition on a global scale. RANGKON HILTON, her second Kennedy Miller series, granted the actress a second trophy, Variety Awards, and another na-

tional poll, mutually acknowledged Kidman as the Best Actress of 1989. Hired for non-blockbuster films that were produced in her native country, Kidman was especially itching as a high school student in FLINT-ENO, the second installment of writer/director John Dugan's "coming of age" trilogy.

Her decidedly Australian accent has hardly circumvented Kidman's access to plum U.S. roles; in fact, she has linguistically acclimat-

ed herself to Teak and Irish tongues in past films. "I'm lucky in that sense, that I don't have a lot of trouble with doing an accent," Kidman explains. "It's like doing homework, and then you do the homework in, it makes it so much easier during the exam." Nevertheless, Kidman admits her debut as a U.S. femme was "acery, because—suddenly!—you're speaking with an American accent to Americans. You think every little sound they



TO DIE FOR: Suzanne (Kidman), in search of reliability, heads up the housewife with her ill-fated greens (Cruise)

"TO DIE FOR and PORTRAIT OF A LADY will never gross \$200 million. I just choose movies for whatever visceral response there is."

hear, it's wrong. At first, it was rather intimidating. Just before *BATMAN*, I'd done *TO DIE FOR*, where I speak from the beginning of the movie—to the end of the movie—almost non-stop. A lot of it is me just sitting and talking into the camera. So I've played a number of roles now that are American roles. But it's amazing how some great actors just can't even do accents. You see certain actors like Pacino—he admits it—he's not great at accents. A brilliant actor, but he always goes back to that New York [accent]. He's interesting to see do Shakespeare."

Kidman is an aficionado of Australian films and would love to perform in more of them. Consider the Aussie film industry is experiencing a renaissance; she directs attention to the art house success of *THE ADVENTURES OF PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT* and *MURIEL'S WEDDING*. "They didn't offer me *MURIEL'S WEDDING*. I would have put the weight on!" she laughs. "But they didn't want me to do it. I actually don't get offered a lot of movies in Australia.

There aren't a lot of movies made there but a lot of times they want unknowns, because that's what the industry is growing from at the moment. But there's one project that I'm looking do at the end of next year."

As a parent and wife of superstar Tom Cruise, this "working mom" admits her schedule can be exhaustive; nevertheless, the couple displays a family calendar that prescribes a plenty of leisure time with the kids, Isabelle and Connor. "I've come away here [Atlanta] for three days, and that's so unusual for us because Tom and I spend almost all of our time together. And in the last month, I've been to Canada—and I've been here—and now, as soon as I finish this interview, I'll go off and we'll be on the telephone." The decision to adopt two tots was determined by "our love of children. As a woman, the time when you're working as an actor also happens to be the time when you're raising children. The age range between 25 to 40 is where all the great roles are, and it's also the time when you've got to raise your family. And

I don't want to deny myself that. I love to be around children." Kidman would like to give birth someday, in fact, she and Cruise would like to eventually raise no less than four offspring.

But, professionally, the couple is less interactive; Kidman never consults with Cruise regarding her selection of roles. "If there are locations involved, we certainly discuss that stuff. But we don't really cross over into each other, or

choose movies for each other, because then it becomes the other person's choice. It's your art form that you're choosing to explore, and if you have someone else telling you to do it—or not do it—that can interfere with the purity of that. So we try not to discuss it but when we're in the middle of a film, we'll read scenes together or we'll work on stuff, or I'll see his clothes sometimes or he'll see mine. So there is some sort of collaboration, but a lot of the choices are made very much by ourselves.

"I think, sometimes, I'm judged on the level that Tom is judged on, instead of my being considered a younger actor who's trying to build a career. But that's changed, even in the last few months, with *TO DIE FOR* and *PORTRAIT OF A LADY*. Since I came to the States, I've been put in a position where you have to

Go Kidman and Kidman parties in *BATMAN FOREVER*, the reason for the role (right) selected Kidman to "Archie" Hayden Christensen (P. O. Connors)







DEAD CALM Hackman and Ardant, directed by Philip Haas (PATRICK GAMBEL), in a married couple's official oil war.

think of acting as a business. And I've never been able to do that, and I can't do that, because I don't choose roles that way. It's not hard to think of it as 'we have to do this, because that film needs to make money.' Tom has a great philosophy on that. He says you make a movie because you've got wants to make that movie. You don't make a movie because you think that movie is going to make money. He says he's never, ever made a movie that way. And so, I apply that, otherwise, I would never have made *TO DIE FOR* or done *PORTRAIT OF A LADY* because they're not going to be huge money mak-

ers. They'll probably do quite well, but they're never going to be \$100 million movies. For me, I just choose movies because for whatever visceral response there is, that's the reason I want to do it. There isn't a lot of planning in the sense of, 'I have to do my small film' or 'my big film.' If you do three small films in one year, then that's great—or you do one big film because there's something about it that intrigues you."

Although Kidman's reputation has afforded her the liberty to develop personal and peculiar, she's acknowledged that the number of women's roles is proportionately underwhelming com-

pared to male opportunity. Kidman challenges me to compare the volume of scripts submitted to Cruise to "the number of scripts that, say, an upstart, Jodie Foster, would be reading [in] a substantially different. That's just one of the problems of being a woman and working in film. There aren't a lot of great roles."

While eager to script good stories into film, Kidman, unlike her peers, including Ms. Foster, claims she has no "burning desire" to organize her own production company. "You can be in a situation where you don't have to produce it. You can find material and take it to somebody, when you

"Since I came to the States, I've been put in a position where you have to think of acting as a business. But I don't choose roles that way."

reach a certain status, where they will fund a movie with you in it. That's a great situation to be in and I've only just gotten into that. For me, that is more interesting. I'm not putting down whoever chooses to do that, because that's great, but I haven't got six hours sleep a night. Then is, at the moment, producing *MIDWINTER IMPOSSIBLE* and it's a lot of work. I just love the act of acting at the moment. I've really thrown myself into that and enjoy that. [Director] George Miller once told me that one of the great things about Meryl Streep was that she didn't have any aspirations to be a director, or to have her own production company, or do anything like that. She's solely focused on her acting as her art. And he said she's so incredible about that. And you look at what a genius she is at what she does, and I think there's something to be said for that."

Polarizing herself from the klutzy bombshell that she portrayed in *TO DIE FOR*, Kidman is currently occupied with her bespectacled Henry James heroine in the aforementioned *PORTRAIT OF A LADY*. Enlightened to the project when it was conceptualized as an Australian theatrical production, she called director Jane Campion to inquire about casting. "At this stage, Jane was editing *THE PIANO* and hadn't won the Palme d'Or, so she was unknown in the States unless it was in the arthouse circles," recounts Kidman. "But I had always

followed what she was doing. I called her and said, 'I would love as much as do this play with you.' So we were talking about doing that. And then we talked about making it as a movie, and it all just kind of started. We've all been actually doing it as a play in rehearsals, just working on scenes with other actors as if we were preparing for a play. And we've branched out now into preparing it cinematically."

Though they previously co-starred in **DAYS OF THUNDER** and **FAR AND AWAY**, Kidman and Cruise have no imminent plans for a screen reunion; however, the couple are actively supporting a script development by screenwriter Buck Henry, who wrote the **TO DIE FOR** screenplay. Kidman is reluctant to divulge the story, offering only a nebulous description: "It's a witty, dark...satirical! You don't know what you're going to get from Buck until it comes along. He's a lot of fun. He's a wonderful writer, but quite eccentric."

Will Dr. Chase Meridian return for **BATMAN 4**? Again, Kidman has no idea; however, she muses about one unresolved issue that wasn't tapped in **BATMAN FOREVER**. "Somebody asked me, 'So, do you think that Chase is jealous of Robin?' I said, 'Um, maybe that will come up in the next one.'" □

R Kidman looks upward here to do duty work in **TO DIE FOR**. **R. SALLER** has kidnapped her...and something.



KEVIN EASTMAN'S FAMK II

EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW OF THE **HEAVY METAL** MOVIE SEQUEL;
EASTMAN AND JULIE STRAIN UNVEIL THEIR CREATION.

BY DENNIS FISCHER

Sure, he's publisher and editor of *Heavy Metal* magazine, but Kevin Eastman is better known as co-creator of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, the reptilian pseudo-adolescents who will be re-animated for their fourth live-action movie. Recently wed to *FF* (3/3) cover woman Julie Strain, Eastman and his bride are turning collaborators on a **HEAVY METAL** movie sequel. Between projects, the publisher/illustrator/outsider is rewriting the first **HEAVY METAL** movie from books, almost 15 years after its theatrical release, the full-length animated feature is still locked in litigation. Eastman vows that his crisscross version, loaded with enough outtakes to qualify as a "special edition," will finally debut in video stores. But we're getting ahead of ourselves, here.

FOUR TURTLES AND A WEDDING

As a fledgling artist who furnished free illustrations



to underground comic, high school student Eastman also occupied himself with a hobby, collecting humanif with a hobby, collecting rejection slips from mainstream comic book publishers. "At the age of 21, when I was trying to sell work to another magazine," recalls Eastman, "I met up with Peter Laird, and we both had similar styles and similar heroes like Jack Kirby and things like that. I had strengths in color and painting, and he had more strengths in black and white, so we sort of developed this learning process together, where we would learn up and use each other's strengths as well as try to sell our works."

"When I was 22, we created the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Previous to creating the Turtles, we had sent out lots of samples of our work, our storytelling abilities, and we had piles and piles of rejection letters. We used to hang them on our wall. Actually, we almost wallpapered one wall with them. These were sort of our inspiration."

Recounting the concept of the green-shelled heroes, Eastman pays their genesis to "one late night. As we didn't have any of that distracting paying work, we were just working on different



"I've received work
leading to \$20,000 a
week. I'm only getting
scripted 1 hour," says
Julia Roberts. Opposite
page "Halle's
revelation of her as
Fable II is now identity
crisis has, where a
tough, leading actress."



idea. As a joke, I wanted to make Pete laugh and I got this goofy idea about a Ninja Turtle, and I did this sketch of a turtle standing upright with a mask on, and he had nunchucks strapped to his arms and things, and I said, "Hey, Pete, look at that!"

"A Ninja Turtle was a natural parody—I mean, the slowest creature being a Ninja was funny. Pete laughed and he had to top my sketch by doing another sketch, so he did a sketch of a turtle and changed some things and passed it back to me—and I started laughing. So I had to top his sketch, so I did a sketch of four turtles all standing in this pyramid-like formation. I penciled that and gave it back to him. Pete asked it and returned it to me, with the addition of 'Teenage Mutant—' to the 'Turtle' part I had come up with. We were just literally on the floor, laughing at this point."

"The next day, we got up and didn't have any of that distracting paying work going on, so we said we should really try to come up with a story to tell how these guys got to be Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. That was November 1983, and we worked on it through the winter and self-published the first issue in May of 1984."

Both artists pursued their mutual dream by divesting their go-karts. Eastman's commitment was a return on income tax, and

Left: "Heavy metal is my fashion."
Below: "Kevin and I were married August 26th in Martha's Vineyard."



"We were stunned! We debuted our *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* comic book in '84 with 3,000 copies and, one year later, celebrated the book's expansion to 35,000 copies."

Laund withdrew some money from the bank. "To our surprise, the comic book worked," smiles Eastman. "We went from 3,000 copies of the first issue in 1984 to selling about 35,000 copies by the anniversary of the first issue in May, 1985. We did it ourselves out of our own living room, which is actually where the name Mirage Studios had come from—the fact that the 'studio' was a garage. We didn't have a studio, it was our house and our living room."

Unlike other comic book artists who literally gave away their rights to franchise developers, Eastman and Laund—functioning as their own publishers—were in complete control of their creation. The partners, securing 100% authority over licensing fees, were financially compensated for a profusion of merchandising tie-ins. According to Eastman, agent Mark Friedman reserved options for Turtles-related toys, children's books and a TV show. The pitch was greeted with letters of intent addressed from Playmates, a toy company, and a division of Random House that geared its literature for tots. Fred Wolf Films expressed interest in an animated series.

"We started working on it in 1986," explains Eastman. "and, even then, still didn't believe it was real or going to happen until we could go to our local toy store and see and touch these things—or see in TV Guide that these things were listed and going to be on the air. Between Christmas of '87 and New Year's of '88, KID'S SCHMIL WACATION launched the toys with a campaign that stretched through five episodes. The toys hit the

shelves six months later, and we haven't stopped since."

Two years later, Eastman founded Tundra, a company that guaranteed an artist the retention of rights to his/her creations. "I felt there were so many other worthwhile characters, concepts and creations out there which would be artistically successful," he notes. As publisher, Eastman adhered to a policy that offered artists the opportunity to create—sans the risk of jeopardizing ownership of their work via company take-over. Sort, realizing that his own output was skyrocketing, Eastman turned Tundra over to Dennis



Above: "My first time in Andy Roberts' *DAY OF THE MURDERER*." Left: "Me in my alter ego, Falcia, in the *HEAVY METAL* movie sequel."

Kitchen, whose Kitchen Sink Press was established on similar principles.

Eastman bought *Heavy Metal* in 1981; he was introduced as the magazine's owner, publisher and editor-in-chief in the January 1993 issue. One of his current missions is resurrecting the aforementioned *HEAVY METAL* movie from exile.

Released in 1981, the animated anthology was written by Dan O'Neamen, Richard Carben, Angus McKee and Berni Wrightson. The SCTV alumni (John Candy, Joe Flaherty, Eugene Levy) supplied the second, heavy metal groups—among them Black Sabbath, Blue Öyster Cult, Sammy Hagar, Journey, Nazareth and

Cheap Trick—were tapped to jazz up the soundtrack.

"At the time that the movie was done," says Eastman, "home video was just on the horizon, though it was sort of seen—at that time—as being just a flash in the pan, something that would never stick. At the time [the producers] did the contract, it was my under-



"I'd like to play 'Vergil' as a three-action character. I'm the most qualified for the role—I'm a real-life super hero."

standing that no rights were secured for the music soundtrack as far as video releases and other uses. "Some artists insisted on more money for their music, prompting so many legal hassles that Columbia/TriStar declined to bother with a video release. But Eastman dispatched some lawyers who, he notes, "have done all the follow-up and are in the process of doing the paperwork. Once those rights are cleared up, then we should be able to put it out."

"One of the things we talked about is adding on to the version released in '81,

and putting out a director's cut. We may call it **HEAVY METAL RAW**. We looked at recutting it—if that is a possibility, if that is financially viable—and recutting a lot of never-before-seen material."

Eastman approximates more than ten minutes of animated footage was deleted from the final R-rated cut, then there's a series of scenes, visible as pencil tests, which the producers eventually scrapped. "Specifically, what I remember mostly in the beginning was different and the Corvette scene was longer. There was an actual, entire 12-minute segment that was complete-

ly cut out or never finished.

"You know how typical animation is like work? This is all left tons, like it was completely shaded and done in that sort of strobe effect. The scene for the Lee Van, the evil that was around since the dawn of time, was the longest segment. There were some bits from 'Captain Stern' that were cut out, some 'Don't let's that were cut out. A lot of fragments—some a few minutes here and a few minutes there—were edited down. It was just getting too expensive; besides, the movie was getting too long to have everything in there."

"Also," continues Eastman, "the appeal of having a more contemporary soundtrack is pretty strong. Putting together a soundtrack, similar to **THE CROW** movie would bring a whole other audience into it. You gotta be in the middle ground where you've got people, who've seen the original version, saying, 'No, we want the original version with the original soundtrack. That's the way we remembered it.' There'll be pros and cons either way."

Meanwhile, husband and wife—i.e. Eastman and Julie Strain—are writing a **HEAVY METAL II** script. Similar to its predecessor, the animated sequel will offer a combination of storms. But, unlike the '81 release, Part II offers a dominant presence—a sword n' secrecy because christened **Falk II**—who will surface in such scenarios and tie loose threads together. "It was hard to warm up to one particular character in the first film," stresses Eastman, "—or follow that person through his growth, or whatever was to happen in the movie. So what I wanted to do is have a main character go throughout the whole movie, and have her interest in the different segments."

Falk II, previewed in this issue, is regarded as a replication of Ms. Strain, the erotic thriller luminary who will literally give voice to the character. Pursuing her sister's abduction, **Falk II** traverses across the galaxy in adaptations of popular **Heavy Metal** stories. "If you can imagine Sigourney Weaver as a Terminator-like character, but with a strong human side," grins Eastman, "—that's **Falk II**. It's not a cyborg. She's made out of flesh and bone, it's more the attitude of the character. You have this character with this great heart, and soul, and mission that sort of takes over her life. When you put that kind of force behind a character, who will stop at nothing to complete her

"If you can imagine Sigourney Weaver as a Terminator-like character, but with a strong human side, that's Fakk-ll. She's not a cyborg, she's made out of flesh and blood."

good, it's almost as if she's superhuman—she can withstand a lot."

Eastman had originally conceptualized Fakk-ll for a story that he had written years ago. "But my creative dadn't have enough heart and soul. In a movie like *MAD MAX*, even though it is extremely violent, you really have a warmth and compassion for Max, for his sense of purpose whether it's forced or otherwise. There's nothing to stop him from ascending. It keeps you on the edge of your seat the entire time, until he actually accomplishes it... even though you know he's going to accomplish it."

"Fakk-ll didn't have the heart and soul that I really wanted, or hoped, people would perceive as her character. Julie really filled that in. We worked on the story and different elements that I didn't have before, if you will it down to one thing, it's really heart and soul."

ABOUT THE BLASHING BRIDE...

So which Julie Strain movies qualify as Eastman's favorites? Well, he's a fan of *VICTIM OF DESIRE*, *SOMECRASS* and *DARK SKETCHES*, but Eastman's preference is the trilogy of movies (*THE DALLAS CONNECTION*, *ENEMY GOLD*, *FIT TO KILL*) that Strain made for producer Andy Sidaris. "I enjoy Andy's movies, I love the companies, the action and all the gadgets. Those are some of my favorite ones, and I think her acting just gets continuously better and better. She grows with each role. Julie just has this charisma and attitude that just takes over any project she's worked on."

"I don't want to say this, in the sense that it would take away from what her fans think of her; I mean, a lot of people really believe Julie is that cold, evil black widow that she plays on the screen. But I've never met anyone more down to earth, nor anyone who's kinder, sweeter or with a heart as big as Julie's. I've met a lot of people in L.A., and they just seem heartless and soulless. What makes Julie an amazing person is that she's survived and evolved and grown. She has not been tainted or affected from what I call the 'evil place' at times."

Eastman actually became acquainted with his bride-to-be in November, 1994. Strain was a guest at L.A.'s Golden Apple Comic, signing autographs for admirers, and Eastman enrolled

in "True Romance & Sharon Stone as a gauge. Like me, they do really odd gadget movies." **Q:** "Fakk-ll looks aw..."



"Julie and I collaborated on the HEAVY METAL II script. Originally, Fakhri didn't have the heart and soul I wanted. Julie filled that in. We creatively feed off each other."

in her fan club. Serving as a model for pin-up artist Orlan deBorja, Strain's likeness was attached to a series of paintings. Eastman bought the first, considering that was put on exhibition. The couple's paths crossed again in February '95, and they've been inseparable ever since.

"We both have a similar approach to a writing style," says Eastman, who points out that his spouse has been cast in over 10 movies. "Julie knows stories, she knows makeup, she knows what makes up a good story and what works. We really feed off each other well." Eastman compares their HEAVY METAL II pairing to a quilt, if he feels something is missing, Strain adds a thread to the story to pull it back together. Ideas are exchanged until a satisfactory "wholeness" emerges.

As our conversation drifts back to HEAVY METAL II, Eastman reveals one of the anthology's stories was influenced by his *Melting Pot*. "I started that in 1988," he recalls. "I brought in an artist named Eric Fakhri, to help me finish the series. He was sort of my co-creator at the time, and then we brought in Simon Bisley, who's a British artist, and he paints in this Frank Frazetta-like style. He did *ABC Warriors* and *Judge Dredd*, then he did *Lots for D.C.*, which really made him a fan favorite. Then he did *Judgement in Gotham*, which is a Batman and Judge Dredd team-up, and then he did *Melting Pot* with me, which is a 128-page graphic novel that was originally published in four issues. That's coming out as a collection from Kitchen Sink Press this summer, and that'll be one of the segments of the HEAVY METAL movie."

A final title for the proposed \$20 million sequel, which may be ready for a Fall '98 debut, is still in the works. Eastman would prefer to call it HEAVY MET-



"Kevin and I are having this baby together. Her name is Fakhri II. And there's a 14-inch D.C. billboard of me on Sunset & LaBrea, Hollywood to see my face."

AL PRESENTS FAKHRI II or HEAVY METAL OVERDRIVE, pending on the marketing department's decision which title is a more commercial draw. Much like the '83 movie, Part II's various segments will likely be farmed out to animation houses in Canada, Korea, or Japan, and will be further enhanced with com-

puter animation (Eastman is part owner of Lunelight, the company's technology may be sampled on NE-BOOT, a computer-generated Saturday morning series).

Eastman and Simon Bisley are reprising their collaboration with another graphic novel, this time, it's 100 pages and scheduled for

a Christmas release. "Two years ago, I discovered John Woo movies," enthuses Eastman, "and I got the idea of doing this thing which would star Casey and Raphael, which are my favorite characters out of the Turtle universe. I wanted to have them in a situation which would be the longest running gunfight in comics. I pulled together the rest of the story's threads and started doing the lay-outs and designs. Then I presented it to Simon, and he decided to help me tweak and finish it. Simon said, 'If this is dedicated to John Woo, then we really got to go nuts and go balls-to-the-wall on it,' and he did. It's pretty violent stuff."

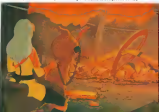
The fourth TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES movie, notes Eastman, chronicles the title characters "in their turtle puberty phase. We had the Turtles remain generally the same age for long enough. Pete and I and we'd always wanted them to continue to grow on some time line that would be continuous, and they'd evolve. We sort of let that lapse for a couple of years, but now we're back on track."

Eastman praises the first TURTLE movie, released in 1990, as the best of the series because "it retained the original grittiness, and the edge, of the original black and white comic books. TURTLES II was, unfortunately, changed into a live-action cartoon based on the movie company's perception of what the market wanted—all this, even though Part I was as successful as it was (\$135 million domestically), which is the Hollywood way of fixing things that weren't broken, so we call that the worst case."

"Number three was sort of right in the middle and, for the fourth one, we've brought it back to the same heart and soul and edge that the first one had. So if they stick to that through its process, we'll all be happy campers." □



"The first MILEY METAL, metal (above) offered a gutsy heroine named 'Came (later)' who was sort of a precursor to Fido's. My MILEY METAL, I (wanted to like me (and) she never quite entirely and wants to see justice served."



CAPTAIN ZOOM

UP IN THE SKY! IS IT A FRANCHISE? A WEEKLY SERIES? NO (NOT YET), IT'S A FEMALE-DRIVEN SCIENCE FICTION SAGA.

By Ken Winkoff

"My own TV pilot was scrapped because network executives gauged my character—a practitioner of martial arts—as 'sissylike.' I wish Liz Vassey, and the producers of CAPTAIN ZOOM, prosperity...TV suffers from a conspicuous deficiency: specifically, women of strength."

Cynthia Rothrock

Over the course of her career, Liz

Vassey often found herself cast as the "other woman" or the "damsel in distress." So she was understandably excited when she finally earned a shot at playing a heroine, who merges brawn and brains to defeat a tyrannical warlord, in Universal's **THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN ZOOM IN OUTER SPACE**.

The two-hour adventure, aired in September as the first movie exclusively tailored for the Encore Stars' ca-

ble network, heads into syndication later in the year, hence, CAPTAIN ZOOM will be broadcast nationwide, including Tribune stations in New York, L.A., and Chicago, as an installment of Universal's "Action Pack" series.

Vassey obviously relishes her role as Tyra, the teenage daughter of Planet Pangaea, daughter of a prominent scientist, who organizes a rebellion against the malevolent Lord Zon. Her subsequent arrest by Zon's soldiers, and exile into captivity, punctures the heart of the resistance. Tyra's younger brother, Haley, transmits an intergalactic SOS. His signal is intercepted on Earth by Ty Farrell, aka Captain Zoom, the affable host of an "after school" TV show. The good "Cap" is soon Pangaea-bound, determined to liberate Tyra and resurrect the rebels' flagging fortunes. But the well-absorbed battle show host finds himself in peril, rules are reversed, and Tyra is obligated to rescue the befuddled Zoom.

Tyra is pretty much a role model for Vassey, who was wowed on space ops. "I started collecting STAR WARS paraphernalia when I was just a kid," explains the native of southeast Florida. "So when the part came up, I said, 'Great, I got to be true again.'" The actress and series producer Brian Levant are hardly strangers. Years ago, Levant cast Vassey—then a 14-year-old ingenue—for a couple of episodes of **THE NEW LEAVE IT TO BEAVER**, which he produced on the Universal lot in Florida. But their rapport faded



Our Cosmos as Vassey: High priestess in "The Phoenix" (and first in "The ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN ZOOM IN OUTER SPACE"). Don't let the title fool you...producers view the TV movie as "prayer against camp."



Announcing the starbusted (oh, so a "bustle star") look, Carrick Brown (then Norwood) leads a gag in another galaxy. But the good-looking Norwood has approximately as much as a chance of beautiful American fighter type (a.k.a. Norwood).



Above: Lisa Vasey, the rebel who purges Philip Pargue, turned assistant as a symphonist on *E.R.*
Below: Debraj (Lyle Barry) leader of the talent underground *People* grants Vasey (Lisa Caroline) the
California sets & says "afterward" director Max Tash "she's the best damn I could find for this"



when Vasey moved to Los Angeles. "Then," she smiles, "about four months before they started shooting *CAPTAIN ZOOM*, my agent called and said that Unsworth wanted me to come in and read for the part. Apparently, Brian had been watching some of the things I had done."

Those "things" included a lengthy resume of TV roles, ranging from a soap to guest roles on hit sitcoms *CHIEFS*, *MURPHY BROWN*. "I've been lucky," says Vasey. "I've pointed on most of the shows I like. Next, I'd like to do a *SEINFELD*." But acting wasn't her original goal. "My older sister, Amy, was the actress. I was a tomboy playing with my Matchbox cars." Maybe it was the perennial rear of the crowd, and smell of grass, that lured Vasey to Hollywood—Hollywood, Florida—for an *OLIVER!* audition. "They needed someone who could hit the high notes," she recalls.

Upon her graduation from high school, Vasey moved to New York and was cast as the psychologically scarred Emily Ann in the daytime serial, *ALL MY CHILDREN*. It was her opportunity to project a spectrum of emotions—though Vasey's role primarily required her to assume a depressed demeanor. "In the show, my real father was a junkie and my stepfather was a gambler. Both my moms were prostitutes. I had to cry all the time."

By the time she turned 18, Vasey made an exodus to Hollywood—Hollywood, California—and landed major roles in several pilots, though none were picked-up as a series. She found work in a few movies-of-the-week, including *SAVED BY THE BELL*, *SAD INHERITANCE* and *THE SECRETS OF LAKE SUCCESS*. Last season, Vasey was hired for her first weekly gig as a building superintendent on *FUG GET*, a sitcom broadcast on the fledgling United Paramount Network. "It was just me and five guys," she grins. "One of them had a crush on me so there was a bit of a romantic interest."

During the same period, Vasey landed a guest spot on NBC's mid-season sleeper, *E.R.* "I was cast as a symphonist who had no self-esteem other than through me," she notes. The producers, intrigued with her performance, invited Vasey to return for a recurring role. Initially listed as "Woman" in the credit crawl, her character was eventually christened "Lu."

Deflecting stereotype, Vasey embodies the Levant concept of a science-fiction heroine. "She's a STAR WARS fan, so she understood what it takes to be a female rebel leader," laughs the producer. "And she's a strong, beauti-

ful woman whose timing is impeccable. We loved her for BEAVIS because she was incredibly athletic. We needed someone who could pick up a guy and dropkick him through the door."

Vassey summarizes the CAPTAIN ZOOM shoot as "the most physically grueling thing I ever had to do. The only time they'd use a double on the set was for a stand-in, and that's if they had to shoot the same scene over and over again. In one scene I had to submerge myself in glacial water. That night they told me, 'Don't worry, you won't be cold. You'll have a wet suit.' What they didn't tell me was that the water has to go inside the suit. In another scene, I'm manacled to a wall in Lord Venk's lair and have to struggle a good with my legs!"

Naturally, the movie's intergalactic environment required a baroque wardrobe: "I got to change costumes more often than anyone else in the cast," relates Vassey. "In fact, I had four or five costume changes," including a smorgasbord of leather and lingerie, which "breaks up the monotony" when you're a wandering anarchist. The leather top, which reminded Vassey of the duds designed for WATERWORLD, disgusted her "from hanging around the Craft table."

Considering her addiction to the the genre, it's hardly "fiscered" by Vassey's unbridled affection for guest star Michelle Nichols. Better known for her role as Lt. Uhura on the original STAR TREK series and its movie spin-offs, Nichols is also a jazz singer turned scribe, her debuting novel, a science fiction thriller titled *Satan's Child*, will be published by Putnam-Borkley later this year. Back on the tube, Nichols plays Sagan, a reporter who keeps Tyra and Company out of peril. "My sister is a huge TREK fan," gushes Vassey. "—and she was so excited when I told her I'd be working with Michelle. I expected to see Michelle anskying up to the set in a white lava, a poodle in one hand and Kraven in the other. I was wrong. She was as sweet, just great. I'd love to work with her again."

Though the production was fatiguing, Vassey—accustomed to more subdued fare like BEVERLY HILLS 90210—welcomed the burst of adrenaline. "I'm athletic," she says. "I love going to the gym, and I actually used to dance—baller, jazz and tap. Growing up, I was a little theatre kid. A kick in the head of a guard isn't all that different from a dance kick. Dancing teaches you when to duck and when to

LIZ VASSEY

"I'm athletic, and a role where a woman gets to show off her strength is fun. It's nice to see the tables turned."



Prisoners on Planet Zogor (Liz Vassey). "Special Effect" Sagan (STAR TREK's Michelle Nichols). Tyra (Liz Vassey) and her younger brother Bailey (Gregory Scott)

punch." Though she covered the physical challenges, Vassey is even more eager to deliver her character's inherent message: "Any role where the woman gets to show off her strength is fun. It's nice to see the tables turned."

Mea Tash, CAPTAIN ZOOM's director, adheres to a "being more with less" adage. "The budget," he admits, "doesn't match the vision." Tash had written for CHEERS, FAME and WRAP IN CINCINNATI before striking off on his own to make THE RUNNIN' KIND, an inexpensive, completely self-financed film. "I did it for \$300,000, shot it in 24 days," he volunteers. Tash subsequently returned to the small screen, directing episodes of L.A. LAW, HOOPERMAN, NORTHERN EXPOSURE and nearly every episode of the critically acclaimed but short-lived series THE FAMOUS TEDDY Z.

Tash, who grew up in Chicago watching FLASH GORDON on WGN, met Levant when they convened on the set of THE NEW LEAVE IT TO BEAVIS. Striking up a partnership, the duo collaborated on a project that didn't pan out. However, when Universal flashed a green light for CAPTAIN ZOOM, Tash was Levant's first choice to direct. Concluding the arrangement was a mutual inclination to turn the script into a two-hour made-for-TV movie. "One direction it could have gone is campy, as a takeoff of certain films," says Tash. "But we never wanted that to happen. The feel we wanted is that this world really exists somewhere. We wanted to go as 'real' as we could. We are playing against camp."

Indeed, just the mere mention of camp sparks genuine hostility from the normally jovial Levant. "I really don't want it to be campy," he insists, as the perpetual smile suddenly lapses into a scowl. "That makes fun of the genre. We're putting a new spin on these elements and embracing what could be called a cliché. We walk that tightrope that can go too far in any direction; the whole thing could fall apart. We tried to keep the rope tight and keep our balance between being a parody of ourselves and embracing the traditions of the genre."

So confident that he's balancing that fine line, Levant vows that the two-hour premiere of CAPTAIN ZOOM is a prelude to a TV series. The movie concludes with a broad opening for a sequel and cast members look forward to renewing their roles.

"It's my intention to make CAPTAIN ZOOM a franchise," enthuses Levant, the smile returning to his face. "This is something I believe in, in heart and soul."

Indeed, variants of a CAPTAIN ZOOM recreational ride at Universal Studios, not to mention the malleable lunchboxes and action figures, have generated serious speculation about Fargus's prime time playgroup. "This can end as it is," Levant said. "But on the other hand I think it has a very strong future."

And if the CAPTAIN ZOOM pilot winds up landing as a weekly series from Universal, Liz Vassey looks forward to negotiating a recurring role with her producers. Her only contractual reservation may be a ban on plunging into more glacial pools of water. "I'm from Florida, where they don't have glacial pools. I just see cold water and I wimp out."

VIRTUAL REALITY VIXEN

LORI SINGER TAKES RISKS; THE CANCELLED SCI-FI SERIES, *VR5*, IS AMONG HER EXPERIMENTS.

BY JAMES VAN HISE



She's one of the rare breed of film actresses—not unlike Theresa Russell, Jennifer Rubin or Emma Thompson—whose choice of scripts is not determined by commercial goals. Sure, Lori Singer has made concessions to the box-office, what with *FOOT-LOOSE*, a 1985 Tom Hanks comedy called *THE MAN WITH ONE RED SHOE* and her only genre film, *WARLOCK*, but most of her work is detached from the mainstream. Singer's films are not "user friendly," formulaic fare—a la *DUMB AND DUMBER*, *WATERWORLD*, *NINE MONTHS*—but dark, brooding and appealing only to a small core of the public who correlate the mainstream medium with a pump who carves on the sole of "entertainment." Few moviegoers could acknowledge the existence of *SUMMER HEAT*, *SUNSET GRILL*, *MADE IN U.S.A.*, *EQUINOX* or even Singer's Robert Altman film, *SHORT CUTS*, but regardless of whether or not these films are collectively



Facing: "I had some really complex imagery," says Lori Singer, who applied the branding to her VR role. Top: Singer describes the sci-fi show as "uncomfortable," but Fox pulled the plug on the series.

VIRTUAL REALITY WHEN

**LORI SINGER TAKES RISKS; THE CANCELLED
SCULP SERIES VRS IS AMONG HER EXPERIMENTS**

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LITERATURE CITED

144 was offered the VHS script and I thought it looked interesting: a wonderful inspiration and something that hadn't been done before. That's what made me look twice."

continued. "Hager's kind of general idea of doing an investigation and then to have the company say that they expected a change only in 1993 is like the TV and the movie *Public Enemy*. The idea was to have a commercial like Hager's message, but they had better understand the FBI, the CIA and the State Department. Especially in carrying out FBI's own ideas. Good."

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"I am not a Communist," he
 says. "I am a working man
 who is just as patriotic as the
 rest of the American people.
 I only want to see
 America's natural resources
 properly managed."
 "I am not," Third
 said. "I am just a plain
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and every year through the late 1980s as that I was unable to continue the past tradition for a couple of years because of physical illness.

There are no problems with the use of the word "strong" when it is used to describe the evidence that supports the value of TV about life. There are no problems with the information provided to the public about the value of life, the danger of alcoholism and the value of life. There are no problems with the information provided to the public about the value of life, the danger of alcoholism and the value of life. There are no problems with the information provided to the public about the value of life, the danger of alcoholism and the value of life.

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Journal of Internal Medicine 247: 105–112





LORI SINGER

"I was offered the VR5 script and I thought it looked interesting; a wonderful inspiration and something that hadn't been done before. That's what made me look twice."

successful, Singer's demand of generic filmmaking is a courageous risk, before, it's less than surprising that Singer approved a weekly sale in Fox's VR5, her first TV series since *FAME* (1982-83). The show was no less experimental than Singer's movies, including the linear narrative of *THE X FILES* and other a-f-x-ian. Equally unsurprising, VR5 was short-lived.

"I was offered the pilot script and I thought it really looked interesting," recognizes Singer. "It was a wonderful inspiration and something that hadn't been done yet. That's what made me look twice. I had some basic computer literacy. I've actually tried what they call Virtual Reality, but I've never been in an actual flight simulator yet, so that's what I was really looking forward to."

"This, of course, is completely fantastic where you can actually go into your computer and explore your subconscious, along with someone else's, and change persona and get a whole new expanding view of the world."

One of the fantasy aspects of the series was Singer's accessibility to a realm of Virtual Reality, but why was only her character, named Sydney, regularly "teleport" with this aptitude? "That wasn't really explored, but the concept was actually originated on Sydney's return," explains Singer. "But it's supposed to be able to work just by virtue of the fact that you literally have the person's ear for a moment, then the wave will be able to hook in, that your voice

and carry your thoughts and the idea is that I can actually hold on to your thoughts for a couple of seconds, which in Virtual time is longer."

Even in its embryonic stage, VR5 was developed to textually subvert the conventions of TV storytelling. "This was an extremely collaborative process in terms of every aspect of it," relates Singer. "As it turned out, it turned into lots of things. This wasn't really just one story. There was the mystery of Sydney's family, the mystery of the Committee, then there was the mystery of Sydney's powers and how they can be used both by the Committee, and by her, and by other people. Then there was that which is a whole world unto itself, which is Sydney running around and what she might do. Then there was the exploration of Sydney's growth as a person, and where that might

Critics charge the public needs *TRIPPLING IN MIND*. Alan Rickman is "a little too serious, a little too dark."



LORI SINGER

"VRS had that idea of exploring the subconscious, which is wild. But it ended on a cliffhanger. There are still many secrets to be explored, both in real and virtual life."



She Kristofferson supported Singer in the risky 'THE LAST RIDE' in 1990. One eye closed. "It is an unusual screen experience that almost defies description."

have taken her and affect her virtual life. There was just many ways of exploration, and so part of the mystery would have been uncovered, though you wouldn't have had a great understanding of the Committee or anything like that. But more pieces of the puzzle are fitted. I think they all had certain aspects of them that are an interesting part of Sydney's journey. They're all very different."

Singer boarded the series in August 1994. "We started shooting VRS in September and we ended in late March. We shot 12 episodes in that time." Hollywood locations, utilized for various episodes, included "an old L.A. County jail down by the train tracks. Downtown, alleyways. The [Anderson] hotel where Robert Kennedy was shot. The old City of Angels hospital, which is also now closed. We also shot at Leo Carrillo beach."

And then there were the underwater scenes, no shortcuts or optical effects, the actors—who made their descent within a car—performed their own stunts. "That was wild, so wild," giggles Singer. "We went to Universal. They have a big water tank, and they sink the car down into it. They

heat the water up to 98 degrees and they have all these lights around. It's actually submerged. Then they had a lot of the gaffers and camera people, in wet suits and goggles, with a special camera down there shooting as we sank in the car, which is really scary!"

"We did it many times. The original take was many times over the course of a few days. They hired a safety diver, and we had the regulators in our mouth as that we could breathe. But then we'd take the mouthpiece out, and hook it under something, and if we really ran out of air and we're in trouble or something, we make the out-off sign. If you couldn't find your regulator at the precise moment—because it slipped out or something and was floating away, and you couldn't see it because of the murky water—then you're supposed to make a sign, and the diver would open the car door and get it to you. It made for a couple of amazing days."

One of the show's more baroque distractions was a guest appearance, in the pilot episode, by Penn Gillette, better known as the corpulent half of andomorphist magicians Penn & Teller. "He has not left Sydney's consciousness," laughs Singer. "—he's definitely made an effect. He was wild. He's amazing. I ran into him at Coliseum Books on Broadway at 57th street."

I asked Singer to estimate VRS's impact on prime time, had the series had been afforded some longevity. "It had that idea of exploring the subconscious, which is really a wild inspiration. Just in terms of actuality, and the fact that we were taking 10 days to shoot each episode, shows made with a great deal of care—and they were tremendously long days, so that it seemed like it's a small, independent schedule for each show, which was spectacular. The crew are great people. The concept and crew made it

special and unique."

Naturally, the show's end premise prompted a profusion of visual effects, in fact, Singer often interacted with the illusory props. "A lot of the action would happen before you as you see it," she explains, "and then it would be somewhat toyed with in post-production. But the bare bones of it were there, and were realized, so you would have something to react to. Janet Margules would oversee all the special effects, so that much of the time you would actually have something to react to. Then she would enhance it or change it somewhat. Janet would be there, so you could speak with her about her concept of what it might be after she toyed with it, hence, you could visualize it and have a skeleton of what it would be. Then you could visualize the rest and react to it so that it was really fun. She helped make it present so that it wasn't completely reacting to something which did not exist, which did happen sometimes, but that was rare."

As an example, use the episode where Singer climbed into a surreal tree overlooking a virtual reality abyss. "I was actually in a tree. They had this amazing tree on the set and Janet would then describe to me how the tree was the sign, and how she felt that the man falling into the abyss would be reflected. That was all discussed, therefore, it was not a complete mystery."

But the real mystery is the fate of Sydney Bloom, Singer's character, was trapped in level VR7 as what turned out to be—courtesy of Fox's pink slip—the final episode of the series. "It ended on a cliffhanger," shrugs Singer. "There are still many secrets to be explored, both in real life and in virtual life."

But Lori Singer isn't shedding any tears. The busy (she just wrapped *FTW: THE LAST RIDE*, a film about a couple of drifters who fall in love—"The FTW stands for Frank

Though she supported Robert E. Green in 'THE LAST RIDE,' Singer was a "no show" in the film's script.



T. Wells," relates Singer, "which is the character that Mickey Rourke plays. He's actually an old rodeo star who's just getting out of jail. I'm being chased. The producers are replicating the marketing plan used by **THE LAST SEDUCTION**, they'll show it on HBO, then they'll release it to theaters."

Singer describes her own film character as "troubled yet wild in spirit. High spirited. She comes from a troubled family and she didn't have parents there to guide her, and she was out on her own with just a brother to watch out for her. So she's a wild character who's developed in her own private way."

Mickey Rourke, whose proven track lifestyle and fading film career is the stuff that scandal sheets are made of, has earned the respect of his co-star. "I think that when you see **THE LAST RIDE** you'll see that Mickey worked very hard," assures Singer. "A lot of what we did is on screen. There's a lot of heart and I think it shows up. I'm very proud of it."

Asked to cite the best film of her career, the actress notes, "I've been really lucky, such as in **SHORT CUTS**. It's an amazing film and Robert Altman is brilliant. I loved

continued on page 88

*If each VHS episode was shot in 18 days, it takes a long time to shoot a part of **SHORT CUTS**. It's an amazing film."*



Elvira

mistress of the dark

BY YENALLA DE VILLE

That's all I ever hear. I try to be sexy and evil and mysterious, but where does that get me???—"You're not of here, de Ville?" You see, my name is Yenalla de Ville Carol, you, one of my scorching relatives in cousin Quaelin's and I have this nightclub act. I sing, I



dance, I do a little stand-up. I've got costumes (all black, of course), some tight, some long, some rubber, some feathers and some are just plain little. I've got my hair (all black), some straight, some curly, some wild, some long. I've got my makeup, Parisian pale with

scarlet lips and oh-so dark eyes. Okay, it's a gig. But when I perform, it's always the same: "We need EVEL-RAU!" Give me a break already, people! I'm trying to do my own thing here.

Anyway, I see this magazine, *Private Paradise*, and I think, 'Gee! I know the perfect dress to take. Mom, I call



Feeling The (Hollywood) Whores of the North enjoys a little R&B before learning her secret role as Hollywood's answer to "Gone With the Wind" (Gore is inserting whimsy in movie's '68 campaign).





this editor man, Bill George. I start giving him this great pitch about how I would be this absolutely fascinating interview, how I'm so talented (alright, alright, at least I try), and I perform to sell-out crowds (as what if the club's maximum capacity is 500, and I have a slew of fans (well, kinda, my fat neighbor, who's a TV repairman, and his geek friends always stare at me), and I had three movie offers (Okay, so I was an extra in a *Hooters* Twinkie commercial) and, also, I would really make a great front cover. But then George guy gets temperamental and starts yelling, "Miss de Ville. Miss de Ville. MISS DEVILLE ON LORD, WOULD YOU PLEASE SHUT UP?" Ood, he didn't have to shout at me. He says, "No, we can't use you right now but do you have any talent as a writer?" Hm-mm, very interesting. Well, I can do everything else, so why not writing, too? "Sure, I can write, Mr. George." He says, "I need you to get right on this interview, the deadline is next week. I want you to profile Cassandra Peterson... you know, Elvira." WHAT? ELVIRA? Holy Horror Hostess Extrordinaire, Batman! It must be fate, at last! I shall meet the one, the only (Okay, she is the best) Mistress of the Dark!

Alright, alright. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em. After all, maybe she can give me some pointers on my two-bit act. So I'm off to meet with her tomorrow.

THE MEETING

As all cool people know, Cassandra Peterson is Elvira. If you don't get that she happens to be an actress and comedian when she slips into her Elvira alter ego, then you either live on Mars or you lead a very sheltered life. At first, I admit, I was very nervous, twenty palms, dry throat. But she is actually very cool and very down-to-earth. I really dig her as a person, you know? Like, I would be friends with her and hang out, just talk-

"My show was #1 on television but I feel like I was screwed. We did a 3-D telecast and sold 2.7 million 3-D glasses. They kept 50 cents per pair, I got zero."



Cassandra Peterson has written a sequel to her (1988) Elvira movie. "I've can't get a big studio to do it, then we'll just do it independently."

ing about life.

I'm nervous, of course, about her beginnings. Lots of dance and singing lessons postponed her gig as the youngest showgirl in Las Vegas history. Elvira Presley caught one of her shows and took her out afterwards, advising her to pursue a singing career. Peterson traveled to Hollywood and landed a year-long gig as a lead singer for a band that toured Europe. Settling down in Rome, she met Federico Fellini, who cast her in

FELLINI'S ROMA. Though she played a minor role, the whole drama thing turned pretty infectious. Peterson wanted to pursue acting as a career goal.

Then it was back to America, to be specific, New York City. "I worked two jobs," recalls Peterson, "and on top of that, I would go to interviews trying to get gigs off-Broadway, which is another job in itself." We're in complete agreement on this one, New York is a nice place to visit, but we wouldn't

want to live there. Peterson decided the west coast was probably less hostile, so she made her move and joined The Greenlings, an improvisation troupe. Then, of course, there was her "marriage" with the Master of Horror, Elvira. Peterson is quick-witted, chaffing her talent in the background to improve. "It makes you think on your feet, although I don't always have an answer to everything. Sometimes, people want me to be Elvira for long periods of time. After a while, I'm using every ounce of brain power to be funny. I know some people can do it suddenly—not me." Today, Peterson generates the sketches that she customarily "channels" through Elvira. "I thought I wanted all those years of dance and singing lessons," she says, "then when I started doing live shows, everything was integrated. I was able to have a much more entertaining show than if I just talked for an hour. So that was when I realized every little thing you do, and learn, eventually pays off."

Most of you have probably seen the late-night television show, *MOVIE MACHINE*, where Elvira launched her "horror hostess" persona. But if your head's been stuck in the sand for the past decade, dig out back issues of *FF* (12 & 13) and read Dan Crensky's 2-part profile, which describes Elvira's show in some detail. I, frankly, am not going to rebuke what has already been done—if you don't have the money, too bad, they're now double the cover price! What I will tell you is she left the highly successful show after two and a half years. "Actually, the television station lost its license because of an illegal contribution to the Nixon campaign," explains Peterson. "All of their shows were off the air."

Peterson's prosperity should at least be partially attributed to top-rate manager, Mark Fedeiro, who doubles as her husband. Gen, she's got it made. Who



My competition used to be Vincent Price. Unfortunately, he passed away with many of his jobs going to me."

better to trust than your own spouse to navigate your career? Maybe that's what I need, a husband/manager to handle my blossoming career. In any case, Peterson's lucky business partner—keenly aware of Elvira's marketing potential—"finagled away the rights a little bit at a time." This is what happened: "Every time my contract would come up for renewal, they really didn't want to pay me more money, so he [Peterson] would ask for

more rights." First, they got approval for the Mistress of the Dark to guest on national TV shows. The actress recounts lots of programs that requested Elvira appearances: *THE FALL GUY*, *CHIPS*, *FANTASY ISLAND*. "I later had Horro Villacorne guest star on my show," recalls Peterson. "It was around Halloween, so he came as trick-or-treating. I asked if he wanted plain or peanut M&Ms. He said, 'De plain, Elvira. De plain?' And

not she flirty? I love it!

Peterson kept asking for more rights in lieu of a pay hike. The station's lawyers obviously weren't paying attention because, before long, the Petersons owned all rights to the character. "I didn't feel bad about it," deadpans Peterson. "I came to them, I said, 'Look, they loved me, I came up with the character, my friend designed the costume and I wrote the shows along with my partner, John Ferguson. I didn't feel I was stealing something that they gave me.' 'We go, go?' My mother always told me, 'Go get what's yours.' After all, the station was pretty chintzy with the paychecks. 'My show was number one on their station. They were making quite a lot of money in advertising revenue, and I'm getting behind.' I did everything from hiring the talent to getting the props, to sometimes setting the lights, myself. So, I don't feel the least bit guilty."

"I actually feel like I was screwed, they did a 3-D telecast which was a great idea, though we

taped for 24 hours non-stop with no breaks. They sold 2.7 million 3-D glasses in the L.A. area, and kept 50 cents per pair, I got none. I made my \$500 for the week, which after taxes is about \$325. If I could have just made one penny, I felt completely ripped off and abused."

Not to keep on, about four years, but let's turn to "The Case of 'Vamp Runy.'" For those who don't know, Peterson has been tied up in a plagiarism lawsuit filed by horror actress Bette Nardi, who hosted her own horror series—during the '80s—as the pale, evile "Vampira," she reported the same character, whose trademark was a low-cut V-neckline, for her role in *PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE*.

"I don't know why she keeps harassing," says Peterson, "it's really kind of pathetic. The woman had a career and nothing happened with it. She could have taken it and done something with it. She didn't have the right management or good enough advice to continue the career. Then she takes a 25-year vacation, and gets all pissed off when I come out with something similar. There's bound to be someone similar, there's been a hundred other female vamp types who look like the character before her and after her. Since I was the most successful and nationally known, she used me as a target to take out her anger and frustration that her career didn't go the way *she* wanted."

"I couldn't do anything about it, sorry. I wish it would have been successful. I feel bad about it, but there's always someone blaming somebody else for their problems. I think if your thing is going strong enough, no one can steal it. Think about how many 'Became's' Bela Lugosi's estate could have used—Clay

Sam Irvin (ACTING ON BEHALF) is busy to direct the ELVIRA, MISTRESS OF THE DARK sequel. The 1988 release has developed a cult audience in Italy.





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[illegible]

mann rights? First, they've appeared in the Midwest in the past to assist in cutting the price of grain. But even if the current low of programs like government ethanol, they're not. (See <http://www.USA.com/2007/01/23/012307a.htm>) "I don't feel there's anything about our tax plan," says a Midwest farmer who declined to be named. "It's not a bad thing to have in the background as a backstop in trade-negotiating. I think it's the current plans to remove ethanol. It's not the same thing. It's not."

[illegible]

ingest for 34 hours a week, with 11 hours. These could be a significant improvement for the U.S. average. And, says a study last September by researchers at the University of California, "It's really hard to know just how many people are eating poorly." ■

Not to forget about how much his interview to "The Case of Hong Kong" Pao (then also called *Wing*) magazine has been quoted in a plagiarism lawsuit filed by Chinese authors. Ma's novel was featured just a few weeks earlier, starting in Feb. as the title article "Hong Kong: the forgotten city" (in Chinese), before the magazine was a few days from closing. For more on Pao, see Pao and Pao's Pao, page 10.

"I don't know why," says Peterson, "it's really kind of a fluke. The specimen found in our case is of nothing unusual or at all. The animal has no teeth, so it must have eaten something soft like fish. The other three have the right jaw apparatus to grab a single individual in a moment like mine. There are others, like *Stegodon*, which would grab and pull out a lot of meat. I think it must have been something small." "There's a lot of fossil mammals that are a little bigger, a little

[illegible][illegible]

years used the same names—Shawled But also happened for me because at the time when we were studying the literature to get into college, we knew of Virginia. When we first thought of sending her literature, it came to us as her father, so that was the connection. In fact, when we first met her, she was still also interested in studying literature. She was a student at the University of Virginia.

Devereaux has pulled his dogs through the mazes of Texas potholes. Following are a few. (Rivers cannot be read around me, including the Gulf of Mexico. The nearest trackway is heading the Gulf course. Several episodes by Kevin Mervin, Paul, Bill, and John. "I should be having lunch with the Perry Agency. It's a little more complex than I want to expect. I'm a little bit of a mess. But you can't blame me."

[illegible][illegible]

44. Since I'm the most nationally known female vamp, [Vampire] used me as a target to take out her anger that her career didn't do the way mine did. 21

[illegible][illegible]

There happens to be another group of my good friends, though, in London. It played a somewhat odd role in the events of 1994, but more on that later.

And, yes, there are several places to rent a Big Boy, **MEMBER OF THE CROWD**, member of last February's top performers, the company's CEO says. "We're not going to be a company that doesn't have a lot of people who are not in the company," he says. "We're going to be a company that has a lot of people who are not in the company."

It's a good thing that the American people have been able to see the good in the American people. The good is that the American people are not afraid to stand up for their rights. They are not afraid to stand up for their rights. They are not afraid to stand up for their rights.



even used the same name—*Dominic*! It's also frustrating for me because at the time when we were putting the character together, I never even heard of *Vampires*. When she first accused me of stealing her character, I'd never seen her before... so that was really interesting! In fact, she said in an interview once that she borrowed her character from *Blatant Adultery*."

Peterson has paid her dues through the years. Thank goodness those days are over. Elaina moved on and moved out, taking the world by storm. One annual tradition is hosting the Halloween festival organized by Knotts Berry Farm. But this year, she says, "I started feeling kind of down here in Orange County, it's a little more energy than I want to spend. It's a really big production for me to put together, I feel like I've disappeared on Halloween because I'm down there. So it's time for me to get out and do something else for a change. I have several offers from different cities around the country." One such engagement has been reserved for the Minneapolis branch of *Spooky World*—"America's Horror Theme Park"—located on Murphy's Landing in Shakopee (September 30th to October 2nd).

A traveling show is not the only thing on Silver's agenda, she's currently working on a deal for a Las Vegas show. Now, you know you've got talent when you headline there, though Patterson claims there's a fly in the ointment. "It's a bit of a problem. They either want you to stay a very long time, so that you can make all the money back that the show initially costs to put on.

"Since I'm the most nationally known 'female vamp,' [Vampiria] used me as a target to take out her anger that her career didn't go the way mine did."

or they have someone who comes in for the weekend, someone big like Frank Sinatra. So finding a niche for someone like me, who would be there for one month, is really difficult. It's like logistics of how I was going. When you have to hire all unions—musicians, lighting, singing—it takes so much money to put together that playing for a month doesn't really pay off. It's one of the obstacles we're up against. We're still trying to see if there's a way to work it out."

A television pilot was another project Peterson found hard to sell. *ELI/RA*, produced for CBS in conjunction with 20th Century-Fox, offered three adventures by leaping in a small town. They possess "really cheap" powers, and wield them only when it's absolutely necessary. "Ruthanne Holman played my aunt, and we concealed our true identities

A limited edition of *Midnight in the Dark* (photocopy) has been issued by TransTalk Communications. This year's midwinterfest series includes also new material of Einar's *Midnight Words* a reprinted version of her award-winning ghost stories and a CD by Willem Hannink.

from the people. My niece, who went to a Catholic girls' school, was totally embarrassed by us and tried to make us look very normal and straight. She wanted absolutely nothing to do with witchcraft—she wanted to be in LEAVE IT TO HEAVEN-land as we called her Jane Claver. We were two completely wacky people." Upon viewing the pilot, the network was impressed by a sitcom premise that merged ROSEANNE with HOME IMPROVEMENT. Executives also headed

Elbarra's show as "too sexy" and thought the risqué burlesque jokes on her *Stripper* for television (keep in mind, though, they would have preferred a ROSEANNE clone). "I would have lost everything if even on the fact that if that show had come out, it would have been a success," Peterson explains. "I really mean that I would love to be able to show the girls to everybody. I wish there was somewhere it could air on television. It came out just how I wanted it, and I'm sure the people would have absolutely loved it."

Peterson takes time out to explore an invaluable partnership with her good friend, John Paragon. He's one of those people that we, in the business, envy because Paragon is a multi-talent. "He played Jonathan Crane in **EEK-WEE'S PLAYHOUSE**," smiles Peterson, "and he was the head in the box. Not only that, but he also directed and wrote the show. He's a fabulous actor, writer, director, singer and comedian."

"He's brilliant. In the beginning of my show, every couple of weeks, he played a character called the 'Threatener.' John's been with me since *Elvira* began, he's like the other half of her personality."

And, yes, there is a sequel planned to 1989's **ELVIRA, MISTRESS OF THE DARK**, matter of fact, Peterson has personally written the script. "It's a little tied up right now though," admits Peterson. "If we can't get a big studio to do it, then we'll just do it independently. Even if it's



a smaller budget than we would like, it's still better to have it out there than to not do it at all." Peterson relates that, in Italy, her first theatrical release has accumulated a cult audience on a **ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW** scale. "It's bizarre! At midnight, everyone goes to see the film. They know all the words and they sing along with the songs."

As a fledgling actress, I have to admit that Elvira is an ideal character. In the huge realm of show biz, Peterson's got a customized niche carved all for herself. Yes, I envy Peterson for many reasons, she's incredibly talented, she's hugely popular and—the cherry atop a perfect hot fudge sundae—she's able to go out in public unnoticed. You see, it's an ideal compromise, fame as the character, freedom as an individual. Elvira is the celebrity, but Peterson—unrecognizable to the general public—is left in peace. "At conventions, people are hip to the fact that I am Elvira," nods Peterson. "But you'd be shocked at some of the places I've been in the South or Midwest. They just don't get it! They think that I am Elvira all the time, the reactions are really bizarre. You wouldn't believe some of the wacky questions I have been asked at press conferences. One little kid, very serious, stood up and asked, 'To what religious affiliation do you belong?' I said, 'I belong to the Church of Cartoon Characters.' 'I thought, 'Is he serious?' I think his mother then asked me, 'Do you worship Satan?' So I replied, 'Well, I dated him once, but I wouldn't call that worshipping.' Then it was like, 'Oh dear God!' The people just started walking out. Having a sense of humor must not be a part of life there." I know how she feels, my great performances are always misinterpreted, people boo when they're supposed to clap and they're silent when I tell a joke, and they laugh when I'm trying to be sexy. They just don't

"If you can get 5 years out of a character, you're doing good. Even big characters, like Fonzie, may only last 5-7 years max. I've had 13 years of non-stop work."



Network executives loved Elvira a TV pilot because the humor was "top." "It had some real heart, picked-up. I could've lost everything on it being a hit."

get it! Peterson also remembers going to a food festival somewhere in the Midwest, and thought she was going to be harassed at the state fair, I can feel for her, I got the blasted hook all the time more often, right in the middle of one of my songs! How rude!

I'm beginning to realize, she and I have lots in common. Peterson is not only an active supporter of PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), but a

recipient of the organization's Humanitarian Award. And years truly is an active supporter of local animal shelters, my personal compassion was prompted by the adoption of a dog, Carmen de Ville, a.k.a. Special Agent K-9, (who happens to love my singing; in fact, she howls along! Elvira's performance, *Evil*, was the first project to bear the "multi-spec" PETA symbol. Peterson also hosted "Far is a Drag," PETA's multimedia report-

mand of the fur industry, which condemned fashion shows in London and New York ("It was both disgusting and hysterical").

The actress also volunteered a pose for one of PETA's campaign posters. "The character in the ad is supposed to look guilty, and ashamed for wearing the fur," Peterson beams. "They wanted someone who looked like a glamorous figure, Marilyn Monroe-ish with a blonde wig." The poster really works, it looks nothing like Elvira or Peterson, for one thing, "Elvira wouldn't be caught dead wearing fur!" Peterson pledged the photograph, which was shot during a routine *P.T.* session, to her 41 charity. "It didn't cost PETA anything, that's how these things get done. People in the business donate their time and money."

By now you're probably thinking, Cassandra Peterson is one busy lady, well, there's more... much more. She has just finished a book, *Elvira's 101 Favorite Best of the Worst Horror Shows* also performed a couple of "cameo appearances", including one in **ACTING ON IMPULSE**, a 1993 Showtime movie that featured Linda Fiorentino as a burnt-out B-actress. The director, Sam Levin, is a friend of mine. He loves my new movie and wants to direct it, which I hope we'll be able to do one of these days. He has been a big fan of Elvira through the years.

"My other 'career' came up in a film by director Randall Kinsner (**HONEY I BLEW UP THE KIDS**, **BLUE LAGOON**, **GRASS**). The movie is called **IT'S MY PARTY**, and it should be out soon. We did the film without even using our name as credits, or getting paid, because it was for our friends. The film is about the life of a very dear friend of mine who passed away, so we're just being ourselves at his house and we're with Sasha, our little baby—it was her film debut."

Naturally speaking, Elvira has just cut out another al-

On an '80s New
York, The
Masters of the Dark
guard their dancing
rights. In the Masters
of the Dark
Versus the Villains
movie





hum. "It's a collection of spooky songs with Elvira Records, and it'll be out just in time for Halloween. Last Halloween, my record did really well. There were two original songs on it. One was written by Fred Boyder of the B-52's and one was written by Billy Knight, who wrote most of the hits by Tina Turner." Boyder and Knight wrote new songs for Elvira's '96 album as well.

Okay, we've covered live shows, a sitcom, books, films, music albums... what more could a girl want??? The answer, of course, is an Elvira pinball game. Yes, you've all probably toiled along with Elvira's debating pinball machine, manufactured by Billy Computing against all the testine-videos, it was the first "pinball" to win a Best Arcade Game trophy, breaking a long-standing record that pinball had been denied for an entire decade! That was like winning an Academy

Following tradition, Elvira is likely to be the center of the festivities for October 31. According to Associated Press, the former mistress of the first drive-in has been designated into "one of the best-selling costumes in America for the past 17 Halloween seasons."

Award," explains Peterson, "I've been such a pinball freak all my life." The games drew big business for Bally, small wonder that the company is developing another Elvira pinball machine, scheduled to premiere sometime near the end of 1994. Let's not forget the *Academy* video game, which tallied huge sales in Europe—master of fact, during its first year in release, the game topped Germany's charts. And for all you computer geeks—myself, inclusive—there's a CD-ROM game, also in development, tailored exclusively for Elvira addicts (stay tuned to PP's Fo-Mail pages for an update).

Finally, sorry to disappoint you, but here's the late-breaking scoop, if you think Peterson will do Elvira for the rest of her life, think again! Peterson is human, only people Elvira is immortal. "I think the character could continue forever as a comic book character," says

as Peterson, "a cartoon, in various merchandizing, as an image which is licensed. As for me, getting up in that drag, I do want to stop doing it before I look like a pathetic old hag! So far, I've been able to keep it together pretty well. I don't want to cross that line where it starts looking less than good."

All in all, Peterson feels quite lucky that Elvira has sustained her popularity. "In this town, you see other stars and actresses, I look at them, and I feel really thankful that I landed on this character that has gone on for 12 years. It's pretty remarkable in this business. If you can get five years out of a show or character, you are really doing good. Even big characters, like *Frasier* or something, they may only last five, six or seven years maximum. Then, something new comes along and takes over. I have had 12 years of solid, non-stop work. I have

continued on page 46





LOST IN THE

BY DAN SCAFFEROTTI

I remember a Catholic priest denouncing it from the pulpit. Kids were herded out of theatres by parental and community custodians. I think PSYCHO was condemned less for its violence, and more for acknowledging the existence of sex and sexual taboos. But most of us couldn't understand what all the fuss was about. I mean, near the film's conclusion, a psychiatrist drops a lot of Freudian jargon about "mommy's boy" Norman Bates, adolescent audiences hadn't a clue what the shrink was talking about. Transvestites? Oedipal complexes? These "sociotri-

Left: "Glorious hot galaxy" (above: PSYCHO) is easy poster art prompted by Mervyn Foster's endorsement



PSYCHO

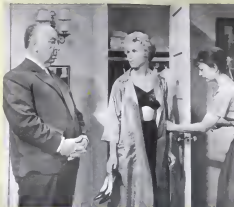
ANET LEIGH

PSYCHO-BABBLE ARE LEIGH'S OTHER SPINE-CHILLING FILMS.

*tee?"—then ended to the elation and feeling any kind of familiarity to middle Americans—were hardly the drawing card for teenagers, which, it was *Anet Leigh*. The morning after the film's premiere, we heard all about it from the high school seniors, on the film's opening scene, it's pretty obvious that Leigh—wearing a bra, sarong, baking in a cheap hotel's blistering summer heat—had indulged in premarital sex. And we all heard, in a subsequent scene, she took a shower. *Naked!**

—Arthur Daffern, spotted from the Earl Theatre (Baltimore, Md.) by crusading Rev. Thomas Pryor during the first 15-20 minutes of *PSYCHO* (1960).

Her beauty and honey presence notwithstanding, Leigh was never dismissed as a sex symbol. The polar opposite of Marilyn Monroe, she substepped the treadmill of naive blondes. Leigh, in fact, was more pitiable than pious: waging a battle of the sexes, she sparred with her male competition in *THE PERFECT FURLOUGH* (1958), played a hardboiled, exploitation reporter in *Marion and Lewis' LIVING IT UP* (1954), plunged knee-deep into controversy when she approached a romantic lead in *THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE*, a thriller shaded in ambiguity that it globally prompted the use of right wingers and radical Communists. Once described as "a great big gruesome joke" the film is now declared a classic.



"The *PSYCHO* is opening like a bomb," writes Leigh. "A white bra and half-nude were chosen. After my character made the money, she walked in a black bra and half-nude." Mr. Hitchcock wanted even the wardrobe to reflect good and evil.

"After we wrapped *PSYCHO*, Hitchcock told me, 'You know, all right, we can never work together again. No matter what role you play—or how well you did it—if I was the director, you would still be Marion Crane to the audience.'"

No stranger to costume melodramas, Leigh was more than decorative in ex-

travaganzas like *THE BLACK SHIELD OF FALWORTH* and *THE VIKINGS*. But her most bewitched role is in a low-budget (\$400,000) movie that, recalls one critic, "was shot in black-and-white to resemble the exploitation quickies that were as profitable as drive-ins." Want more irony? Leigh wasn't cast as

a girl of strength, but as a victim. In fact, the film was promoted with a photo of the actress clad in a bra—sweat and screaming her head off. Leigh's surrender to vulnerability didn't hurt business. *PSYCHO*, which earned \$16 million, turned into Paramount's highest grosser since *THE TEN COMMANDMENTS*, the



Technicolor a year, released four years earlier. And Hitchcock's farewell to Leigh would turn out to be nothing less than prophetic, though she never again worked for the director, the public has prescribed a permanent bond between the actress and Marion Crane.

"I've run the gamut, which is wonderful," smiles Leigh, who was professionally nourished by the now-obsolete studio star system. "I'm very grateful for that, because each different genre just gives you a broader scope. Whether it's a musical or a comedy, or a drama or a mystery or a western, each offers its own particular challenge. And that's the name of the game." The color was *THE NAKED SPUR* (1953), an adult western that accompanied the matinee trade. Anthony Mann imbued cowboy clichés, directing James Stewart as an embittered bounty hunter and Leigh as the love interest of his murderous quarry. "It was a rough shoot because there was only five people, and I was the only lady," she recalls. "Shot in Durango, Colorado, the locale of the movie was rough on itself. I had ridden before but not very much, so I had to learn. What was difficult or different for me was learning to ride sideways for period pictures like *SCARAMOUCHE* and *PRINCE VALIANT*. When you're straddling the saddle, you feel more secure."

Leigh, who cropped her blonde locks and appeared into jeans, described director Mann as "wonderful. Very macho. It was perfect for this role, because my character wasn't exactly a tea-drinking lady of the court. She was an outlaw and she wore men's pants."

During a tenure of eight to nine years, Leigh was a contract player for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. "They loaned me to various studios," she recounts. "After I

SHOOTING STAR: CRICK. "My character wasn't exactly a tea-drinking lady of the court. She was an outlaw."

"After we wrapped, Hitchcock said, 'You know, of' girl, we can never work again. No matter what role you play, if I was the director you would still be Marion Crane to the audience.'"

left MGM. I was under a non-exclusive contract with Universal and Columbia Pictures for five pictures each.

"I thought the studio system was terrific. I feel sorry that the young ones, starting out today, don't have any base or anything behind them. They're kind of thrown out there to fend for themselves. I could never have survived in that atmosphere. I didn't know how to fend for myself but, under contract, I was taught. The lessons were available to me. I felt protected, it was familial. Today, you do a picture and you're just out there—and God help you."

Leigh further detached herself from mainstream safety nets with **A TOUCH OF EVIL** (1958), which was too film noir for general audiences. Orson Welles not only directed, but played the pivotal role of Hank Quinlan, a cop who's been pushed over the edge. Leigh, cast as detective Charlton Heston's bride, is kidnapped by a

drug gang in a conspiratorial plot to discredit her husband. "In his particular way," nods the actress, "Welles was a genius. His imagination was endless, and his visual knowledge was terrific."

"He would see something immediately as an art form and he was able to envision the scenes done there, so he would write a scene to be shot there. The film was very improvisational. The skeleton of the story was there, but he really enhanced it. There was a lot of rehearsing before we started to shoot, and a lot of changing on the set, too. Welles was very close to the actors, and understood action, so the scenes were created for the actors. What [Chuck [Heston] brought to it, as I brought to it, he took and incorporated into the shooting of the scene. He was very quick to utilize what his people brought to it."

Leigh was hardened with a broken arm during the shoot, an injury inflicted upon her while shooting **A CARRIAGE FROM BRIT-**



Leigh catches a **PSYCHO** panic scene (p. 52) during her recruitment, snapping at other stars before she was the victim. (R) Leigh's shattered arm was shot in 7 days

TON. Costarring on the TV show with then-husband Tony Curtis, Leigh recalls supporting actor James White "playing a burglar who was coming into the house. Upon hearing him, I was supposed to come down the stairs and jump on his back. But, in rehearsal, I jumped on his back, we twirled around and he lost his footing. He fell on top of me and I slipped on a stair and broke my arm. I had it set at a 3/4 angle, not a right angle, and always draped it with a coat or a piece of something."

Orson Welles initially intended to embellish Leigh's **TOUCH OF EVIL** character by declaring to camouflage her broken arm. "Orson was funny" grous Leigh. "I had a sweater or something over my arm and when I walked in, he said, 'I heard you broke your arm.' I said that I did, and I showed it to him. What he did say—which I thought was fun-





THE SAKED SPAN was Janet Leigh's third western for director Anthony Mann. Leigh played the girlfriend of Wayne's cold-blooded reaver.

ny—was. “When I heard about it, I entertained the idea of you playing the picture with an actual broken arm...but you’re on your honeymoon in the movie, and that’s a little harsh even for me.” In fact, Leigh’s cast was saved off for her “accouch” scene with a gang of bandits, and *Seven* after Welles bellowed, “Cut!”

Though a financial disappointment, the film often finds a home on “TBS” late. “TOUCH OF EVIL is a masterpiece,” wrote author Danny Peary. “Leigh was never better—and Welles was the rare director to emphasize her legs there.”

Working with producer Howard Hughes was a less gratifying experience. Leigh,

JANET LEIGH ON ‘TOUCH OF EVIL’

“The film was very improvisational. Orson Welles would see some location as an art form and was able to envision a scene for it; so he’d immediately write a scene to be shot there.”

and opposite John Wayne, played a Russian jet pilot who may—or may not be—defecting to the United States. Hughes’ insistence on modifying the post-production edits of *JET PILOT* delayed the film’s release by six years. Leigh was hardly so amenable over the hiring of director Josef Von Sternberg, whose U.S. celebrity crest with the embryonic stage of the talkies. Though credited with turning Marlene Dietrich into a screen legend via the likes of *THE BLUE ANGEL* (1930) and *SHANGHAI EXPRESS* (1932), the warring Von Sternberg seemed an unlikely choice to helm a John Wayne movie.

“*JET PILOT* was one of the last films that Von Sternberg directed,” relates Leigh. “Hughes got him out of retirement. It was the only time I ever heard of testing directors. Hughes actually tested several guys and then he tested Von Sternberg, and I must say he made a great test. His idea for the scene was wonderful. He just happened to be a very difficult man to work for. He was from a school—this Swedish school with Marlene Dietrich—that I knew nothing about.

“It wasn’t quite the American way, or a way that I was used to. Von Sternberg was like a dictator. Though some of his ideas were very good, he had to do everything. He had to press the button, he had to do the lights...You know how some people just rah you the wrong way? Well, Von Sternberg was one of them. He didn’t have a lot of respect for anybody.”

Von Sternberg’s policy of chasing actors even applied to the formidable leading man. “He had John Wayne

doing things that were ridiculous,” recounts Leigh. “I mean, give me a break! I was supposed to knock out John Wayne, though John was twice my size and weighed twice as much as I did. I asked John, ‘Why don’t you say anything to Von Sternberg?’ He said, ‘Honey, if I open my mouth, or let him get to me, I’ll kill the son of a bitch.’”

Even after she wrapped her role, Leigh was hounded with calls for redoublets and additional scenes. “Hughes kept playing with it. It seemed he couldn’t let it go. He was perry to please that hadn’t yet publicly debuted, because of his background and his giant, he was allowed to use this stuff. But the expenditures hardly justified the means, a silly script and the public’s enlightenment to astronomical technology suck *JET PILOT*. “The movie would have been terrific if Hughes had released it when it was originally supposed to be released,” acknowledges Leigh. “But, by the time it was finally released, all that stuff about jets was old news.”

Reeling her roles in medieval melodramas, Leigh notes, “Costume films are great fun to do. I was like a kid playing ‘Let’s pretend.’ I loved them, but I do remember how cold it was on the back lot of Universal at night. You’re sitting with these flowing stuffs things on, and it’s freezing.” Sample her role as Aleta, Queen of the Misty Isles, opposite Robert Wagner’s *PRINCE VALIANT* (1938). The wide screen adaptation of Harold Foster’s comic strip was directed by Henry Hathaway, whose penchant for macho westerns culminated with *TRUE GRIT*, which

earned John Wayne a 1969 Oscar for Best Actor. "Hathaway was a very intense man," says Leigh. "Very totalitarian on the set but, if you met him socially or had dinner at his home, he was the most genial host in the world. He was very good and his pictures show that."

"The makeup people drove him crazy. You'd rehearse under the lights and, at that time, the lamps accumulated for Technicolor photography were very hot. We might rehearse two times and finally get what we wanted. But, by that time, you've already started to sweat and so they'd have to come in and powder down again. And it drove Hathaway crazy. One day, he growled, 'What is it with this makeup crew?' I replied, 'Tim, Alena and she's supposed to be beautiful and all that. Now, do you think that I like getting in here at 9:00 a.m. and sitting in makeup, and getting on the set at eight? I do it because it's right for the character. But I'll tell you what, you want me to come without makeup, groan?' I'll come right to the set, we'll shoot, and I'll get two more hours of sleep." Hathaway never said another word about it.

Leigh married actor Tony Curtis in 1961; the couple appeared together in seven

Times Curtis and Leigh (l. as Harry & Helen Houdini). The couple learned couple's optical effects were minimal.





al films, including George Pal's biography of legendary illusionist HOUDINI "It was wonderful working with George," explains Leigh. "A lot of times, you go on a picture and you have a leading man who you may have seen once at a party, and then you start a love scene or something. But it was wonderful for us because we both knew

the business, and it's fun to do scenes with someone you have a good rapport with. I think it just added to our scenes." But Leigh insists their most spectacular productions were daughters Kelly Lee and Jamie Lee.

One year after the couple split, Leigh supported Dick Van Dyke and newsmaker Ann-Margret in *HYE, HYE*

BIRDIE (1963). Drawing upon her musical training at College of the Pacific, Leigh booked it in a vigorous dance number "I had done several musicals before *BIRDIE*," she explains. "I had done *TWO TICKETS TO BROADWAY*, *MY SISTER KILEEN* and *WALKING MY BABY BACK HOME* as I danced before

that. But I still rehearsed a lot. And if you're not a dancer, you rehearse twice as hard and twice as long."

"Under the studio system, they taught you just what you had to know for the scene. For Metro's *RED DANCEHALL*, I was supposed to be a Russian ballerina and I had to go on pointe—standing on your toes—

The *SMMA* objected to *PSYCHO*'s then-provocative opening scene.



Leigh: "The striking symbolism in *PSYCHO* is repeated use of mirrors."



"Frequently, writer Leigh, [I] often had water poured in quite a few other films [from] with the spectacular results as in *PSYCHO*, however." They too either showed scenes *(JET PILOT, a bubble bath scene)*, showing off in a French bathtub... PERFECT PUNLOUGH...

JANET LEIGH ON 'JET PILOT'

"Josef Von Sternberg, the director, had John Wayne doing ridiculous things. I asked why he didn't say anything. He said, 'Honey, if I let him get to me, I'd kill the son of a bitch.'"

are universally recognized as genre icons.

Contrary to rumors that Hitchcock treated his casts like cattle, Leigh describes the director as "considerate, kind, brilliant, talented and fun. It was a complete joy for me. I found out why some actors found it difficult to work with him. He told his story, and worked the suspense, through the camera. I learned tremendously from that. He really didn't tell me a lot of what to do. I guess I was doing what he wanted. I was adjusting my motivation so I would move, when he wanted me to move, for his camera. If my moves didn't match that, I would regroup and re-motivate and I would move at the right time.

"The one time he did let's say, direct me... was in the opening scene with John Garra. We had done it several times and Mr. Hitchcock is a man of very few takes. He came over and said, 'You're not giving enough passion here. See what you can do.' That's how he got us to 'hook up a little'."

The year was 1950, and the film industry was still under the censorious thumb of Hollywood's witch dog, the Motion Picture Code. Hitchcock realized that his film was pushing the edge of the envelope, what with combined violence, voyeurism, and an adulterous affair ("Paranoia was taken shock by Hitchcock's daring," wrote one reporter, "...in *PSYCHO*, he had photographed Hollywood's first flashing toilet"). Leigh remembers, "Oh, there were discussions. We had to be very careful because, at that time, we were under censorship. Not only did the script have to be cleared, but the

final cut of the picture had to be cleared. The fact that I was in a hot and half-nude was extremely risky, even though you saw less than there is in a bathing suit. It was underwear! We had to be careful that the opening scene was in good taste, and still show the passion we needed to have.

"You couldn't show any nudity, you couldn't show graphic violence. And you never saw blood gushing. You never saw a knife penetrate the flesh in the shower scene. But the way Hitch-

Leigh admits her costume apnea (THEY WOULD, BLACK BODIES OF HALLMARK) was "great fun to do."



which is very difficult. I hadn't trained to be a ballet dancer, so I worked for months to build my muscles before shooting. I actually got no points. I couldn't do a whole routine on points, but I could do close-ups."

The Shower Scene

Only one of Leigh's movies spawned a prequel, two

sequels, model kits and an exhibit at Universal's theme park. It earned Oscar nominations for Leigh (Best Supporting Actress) and director Alfred Hitchcock. Some pretty facile to retread *PSYCHO*'s scenario, its pivotal characters—a taxidermist obsessed with his mother; a pretty pretty thief on the lam, and the Bates Motel—

GH corner: Leigh's friendship with Anthony Perkins was "very relaxed."





Leigh Anne, Queen of the Silver Screen, in *PRINCE GALAXY*. Also described: director Harry Hathaway (TRUE WEST) as "very hysterical" on the set.

cock prepared it, with his editing and the angles, you would swear when you saw the knife on shot #1—attached to shot #2 of the tummy—that it was plunging into the body. People come out of there swearing they are not ripped to pieces. But you didn't because the Gale would have prevented it. That was the genius of Hitchcock."

As a result of Leigh's top-billing, audiences were duped into presupposing that her character, Marion Crane, would be central to the scenario, her very premature death genuinely galled spectators as a result of its unpredictability. "I'm an slightly under 40% of the picture," explains Leigh. "The story is a magician's trick. The audience is led in the wrong direction. You think it is the story of Marion and John Gavin's character, Sam. She steals the money to get him and then

she meets Anthony Perkins' character, Norman Bates. Maybe she will like him. Then she realizes that she's done wrong, and that's the story the audience thinks is going on.

"But, all of a sudden, Marion is no longer there. That's why it's such a shock. Obviously, the story was about Norman all the time. That

JANET LEIGH ON 'PSYCHO'

"The one time Hitchcock—let's say directed me—was the opening scene with John Gavin. He said, 'You're not giving enough passion here.' He got us to heat up a little."

was the brilliance of Joseph Stefano, who wrote the screenplay and changed the novel. In Robert Bloch's novel, the heroine's name was Mary and you never knew the girl. In the film, you know Marion as when she's killed, you are struck. You're devastated. And the fact she actually had a personality made it more of a shock."

Lost in *PSYCHO*'s Shadow

The impact of Hitchcock's film continues to deflect analysis of Leigh's other, equally provocative movies. Though profitable at the boxoffice, *THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE* did a vanishing act after its original release, according to rumor, star-producer Frank Sinatra withdrew the 1962 movie from further engagements "because it dealt with political assassination and Sinatra, friends with John and Robert Kennedy, had the feeling that *THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE* may have contributed to the atmosphere in the country that led to political assassinations since 1945." The film was recently lifted from hibernation and has surfaced on video shelves.

Superficially an agni-

ous chiller, the film—adapted from Richard Condon's 1958 novel—was, notes writer Bill Warren, "one of the funniest, most suspenseful political satires man-quarreling on melodrama ever made in Hollywood." Another critic succinctly described the plot: "Sinatra is a Korean War veteran who believes that the honored heroism of a former member of his squad (Lawrence Harvey) may be the product of brainwashing by an enemy with even more sinister designs. A delicate balance between hilarity and horror."

Leigh plays an enigmatic beauty whom the tormented Sinatra meets on a train en route to New York. "That was a very difficult role," she admits. "The picture is well on its way and, all of a sudden, this strange woman named Rome is on the train. You don't know if she's a red herring or what. For me, it was very hard to establish the validity of this character without saying any straight words. She quotes all of these non sequiturs because

Co-screener with John Wayne in *JET PILOT* (p.), Leigh's physician advised total abstinence. The Man-churian as a result of producer Howard Hughes' tempering.





PSYCHO—L. More p.s. dignity—Laurie never comforts "mother." M. Fink (\$100,000 per film, Leigh—equal in work with Hitchcock—rewarded her for it \$250,000.

she's trying to say to this guy with her eyes, 'I know you're in trouble, I'm here for you'—but, with her mouth, she's saying something about the George Washington Bridge or this or that. And this had to be quickly established."

She describes director John Frankenheimer as "very dynamic, very strong. He knows his camera. We had lunch before we shot that train scene, and talked at great length about it and what Rose was doing in the script. He knew how hard it was to grab the audience when, at the time, the audience direction is completely away from this."

Tapping a fingertip on the mahogany surface of her desk, Leigh concludes a four-interview with one final reflection: "You know, I never acted a role because that would be phony, and that would give me problems. Even though the role was completely foreign to me in terms of what I am, or who I am, it would still come out with something of me in it. That's why I feel that I was able to grasp, or not have a problem, understanding a role. **THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE** was my most difficult role in reaching a

balance."

Prompted to identify a more recent film that she found rewarding, Leigh cites **THE FOG**, the 1980 horror film united the actress with daughter Jamie Lee Curtis. "I was impressed with **HALLOWEEN**, the earlier film Jamie did with John Carpenter," she explains. "I told him if he wanted a middle-aged lady for his next film, write me in. And he did. It was fun to work on. It was a very young group, and very bright. Carpenter was very actor-oriented and open to suggestions. He also used his camera well. Jamie and I only had two scenes together but we were at the same location, so it was fun."

Epilogue

A few weeks later, as an attendant at L.A.'s annual Saturn Awards, I spot Leigh with Vivian Schilling. Leigh glides over to the podium, and announces Jamie Lee Curtis—nominated for **TSU/LIES**—as winner of the Best Actress award (Curtis, shooting the **FISH CALLED WANDA** sequel, was a no-show). Schilling was obviously impressed with the veteran actress. Little wonder. Both women are thegna-



Leigh is the only actress to appear in 3 of the L.A. Times' 50 greatest movies of all-time: **FOUR OF EVIL** (above), **PSYCHO** and **MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE** (p. 51).

DINOSAUR VALLEY GIRL

JUICY IN JURASSIC PARK SPOOFS, NATIONAL LAMPOON'S GRIFFIN DREW IS HOSTESS ON THE PLAYBOY CHANNEL.

By DAN SCAFFARDOTTI

Traversing across a parking lot, Griffin Drew wasn't doing anything more sensual than searching her pocket for the car keys. But a woman, who identified herself as a *Playboy* photographer, abruptly separated Drew from her vehicle. "You bear a lot of that from around here," assails the Atlanta, Georgia native. "But the lady was right. The following Friday, they shot me. I wasn't a centerfold, but I was featured in 10 *Playboy* pictorials, including *Playboy's Book of Legends*, *Playboy's Bathing Beauties* and *Girls of Summer*."

Choking their discovery in a bit of anonymity, *Playboy* tagged Drew with a "Rapunzel Crystal" pseudonym. Through modeling assignments acquired only the briefest essentials, Drew was reluctant to audition for a centerfold shoot. "I should have gone ahead when they asked me to cut," explains Drew, her voice literally drowned out by a torrential rain storm. "At that time, people—particularly in Georgia—were a lot more conservative, and the whole idea of complete nudity was something that I wasn't used to. In *Playboy's Book of Legends*, you're wearing a little bikini half a swimsuit and things like that. It's nudity, but it's very subtle."

More inclined to turn drama into a career, Drew studied method acting at



Drew and DINOSAUR VALLEY GIRL co-star Jeff Foster. "Griffin was a dream," says director Donald F. Glut. "She was so funny at the audition that I grabbed out her role."

the Dorsey Institute. Grinding out productions for their cable operation and video label, *Playboy* offered Drew the opportunity to make her film debut. "Someone had seen me in the magazine," she recounts. "They called me from Los Angeles about doing something for the *Playboy* Channel. I moved to Los Angeles about a week before we shot my first film, *PLAYBOY'S CONFESSIONS AND FANTASIES*."

Cast as "a shy girl" in her 17-

minute vignette, Drew's character "buys this wild, sexy bikini outfit. I go to a locker room, and I pick up this guy and we go riding on his Harley. It didn't include full-blown nudity, but my outfit was very skimpy. On the *Playboy* Channel, profound stories aren't necessary. Matter of fact, I just finished a little short—about 12 to 15 minutes long—for the *Playboy* Channel, it's about three girls who go camping out in the woods. We rove around, go snake thing and even in a stream."

After wrapping several more "shorts" for *Playboy*, Drew was introduced to Fred Olen Ray. The starlet was subsequently cast in *DINOSAUR ISLAND* (OFF 2-01, helmed by B-movie magslave Ray and Jim Wynorski). "Because our 'rave women' characters didn't have a lot of substance, and were underdeveloped to the point where dramatic consistency wasn't necessary, it was fine to be coached by two directors," notes Drew. "But, when you're doing serious drama, you need one director's singular vision to guide your character's growth." The spoof of low-rent "prehistoric epics," produced in the '80s by the likes of Sam Goldstein, was shot on a multitude of Southern California locations, David Carradine's ranch, Melvin Frank and the caverns of Brown Canyon, the latter a choice in such films prodiged on slashed rates. *ITERNAGERS FROM OUTER SPACE*, *ROBOT MONSTER*. "There were five or six leads in that picture," recounts Drew, "and every



From an A-list girl to
punchline material:
"It was over 100
degrees every day,
we were covered!"
Co-director Fred Glee
Ray photographed
Breen for a photo
shoot in 1994
which could

time you have dialogue among six people, the timing is essential. They had to do coverage from an different angles, so it's very timing. It was over 100 degrees every day. We were all sweating."

A role in PANDORA'S POWER PALACE, an elaborately mounted CD-ROM video game (see this issue's PC-Mat), earned Drew a SAG card. Small roles followed, including PM Entertainment's *GAMES*, cast as a masseuse. Drew was directed by Ed Holzman. Her subsequent film for Holzman, *FRIEND OF THE FAMILY*, offered the actress a more complex character. "I'm very thrilled about that one," winks Drew. "It's the story of a dysfunctional family. I play a rich, alcoholic Malibu housewife, with two stepchildren, whose husband works all the time and never comes home. Like, a sort of surrogate angel played by Sherry O'Brien (*FF 4*), plants the seeds for each of us to resolve our problems."

"I depended on Eddie Holzman to indicate how much, or how little, we wanted to expose my character's alcoholism to the audience. We didn't want her drinking problem to overshadow other aspects of the movie. And we didn't want to delude audiences into thinking that she'll permanently abstain from drinking, even though she appears to be redeemed as the film's conclusion. We wanted to be more subtle. It was very important for Eddie to guide me all through that."

Discretion was mandatory for her role in the "erotic dramas," but Drew brushes off nudity "as just another aspect of acting. I'm a method actress, I've studied for years, so I think about someone with whom I'm in love when I do these scenes. Having a friendship with the actor is also very important. There's a lot of professional courtesy; you're careful to ask someone before you touch them. And, before the camera starts rolling, the director tells you exactly what to do. It's more technical than people realize. Besides, I didn't do a great deal of nudity in the film, just a love scene with my husband and a little love scene with Sherry... it wasn't drawn out, we're in a bubble bath and it looks very pretty."

Only two weeks after shooting her scenes, Drew was cast with Bobby Johnson and Loretta McQueen (*FF 3-4*) in another PM Entertainment release, *SECOND SIGHT*. "This was my third time working with director Ed Holzman," explains Drew. "I play a very manipulative, psychotic killer—a

GRIFFIN DREW

"I admit I've been exploited! I've felt violated by gratuitous nudity, but it's a trade-off for a niche in the film industry."



The Playboy model on *FRIEND OF THE FAMILY*'s Malibu Masquerade. "I don't do a lot of nudity in the film, just a love scene with my husband and one with Sherry O'Brien."

crazy, eccentric woman. When rehearsing for a role like this, you sort of cross the line where you allow all that rage you feel inside—from driving in traffic, or people getting ahead of you in line at the grocery store—to come to the surface. Playing a psychotic person, you experience a little bit of dangerous feeling because you have to turn it off—and on—when they say "Cut!" and "Action!" We ended up running a lot of scenes together that I thought would

be shot separately. Usually, I memorize scenes to scenes; I learned to be very versatile on that film."

"My love scenes in *SECOND SIGHT* is very bizarre. I perform as a dominatrix, and I've never done anything like that. I really felt turned-on by the whole thing. I enjoy being that much of a bitch, because it's so different from my personality. I mean, bossing someone around with a belt strapped around their neck—I was very, very surprised that I would find that situation to be so erotic. But I did."

"I think it's because, as a woman, you often feel out of control in certain sexual circumstances as a result of physicality. The man is bigger, the man is stronger. But, in the movie, I was the dominant character and I felt as in control. I found it very, very erotic. I was really surprised, because I wasn't looking forward to it."

But scenes of "erotic thrillers" cluttered the bargain bin at this year's AFM; some were sold for peanuts, the others attracted only dust. The audience, formerly a sanctuary for ingenuos, is pretty much obsolete. What's a screen siren to do? "You can make a lot of money when you do work," replies Drew. "But then you have to be very careful to budget that money, because you can go months without a project. It's difficult to get an audition! And, even when you get in the door, you're up against two or three hundred people who are equally qualified. You get rejection for breakfast! But I refuse to give up."

Yeah, right, I recognize those lyrics. You're from the familiar *Born Cry of a Fighting Bombshell*. Heard it so often, I'm going deaf.

Epilogue (Two months later): OK, maybe I was a little cynical. Last July, I spotted Drew on a cover of *National Lampoon*. "I'm now doing a thing called 'Good Morning News with Griffin Drew,'" she grins. "It's going to be on every issue of the magazine, at least for awhile." Not that Drew needs the grant work,

plenty has transpired during the past seven or eight weeks. For one thing, *FRIEND OF THE FAMILY* tallied huge sales for its video distributor, Timber Entertainment. *SECOND SIGHT* will debut with a slightly less illustrious title (*SINFUL INTRIGUE*). She shot no less than 10 episodes of the Playboy Channel's *NAGGED TRUTH*. And Drew rewarded herself with the purchase of the Thousand Oaks, a cellular phone. It wasn't planted in her car to be deco-

retire, during our conversation, the damn thing was ringing more often than Hugh Hefner's doorbell. Call #1 was from HBO, the cable network is sinking \$5 million into *EROTIC CONFES-SIONS*, and Drew was cast in two of the show's 34 episodes. Call #2 is from an acquaintance whom she met on the set of *MASSAUGE*: "That film, an erotic thriller, was shot a couple of months ago. Hot stuff, literally," Drew recalls, rolling her eyes. "I was casted in a scene for one scene, and I was supposed to simply stick my head in the water to test the temperature. Well, makeup had been frankly applied to my complexion and some hair spray was clinging to my arms. I reached between two candles to touch the surface of the water, and the flames caressed the hair spray to comb it. Flames streaked past my arms and, next thing you know, my hair was on fire! Any-way, the film will probably be released as *MASSAUGE—PART II*." *Part II?* "Well, a minute, how can can this film pass itself off as a sequel to a non-ex-istent Part I?" "Well," Drew grins, "Alan Berenstein, the distributor, said—"*Erregge!*"

Call #3: Donald F. Glas, pro-ducer/director of *DINOSAUR VALLEY GIRLS*, phones in to reschedule a scene. "My character was added in the post-production phase," says Drew. "She's wasn't in the original story. The director scenes had already been shot, when I came aboard I play a 'modern' woman who triumphs over the pangs of dinosaur. Not unlike another film I did [*SIX GUN WOMEN*], I was shot in a series of package."

Yep, Drew's definitely in demand. She recently wrapped *INDECENT BEHAVIOR III*, *FLASH FRAME* and *MIDNIGHT TRASE 3*, the latter "still another erotic thriller." I play

continued on page 68

*Below: Drew's most fiery scene in *MASSAUGE* occurred off-camera. Right: As a career woman posing as a slave in *DINOSAUR VALLEY GIRLS*.*



WASP WOMAN

REMAKE OF B-FILM ADDS NEW WRINKLE TO TALE OF VANITY, VENGEANCE & A BIG BUG.

BY DOUGLAS EBY

"You could see the budget constraints," relates Jan Wrynosiak. Recounting his adolescent reaction to 1959's *WASP WOMAN*, Wrynosiak affectionately grins. "It was an interesting idea. Roger Corman, who produced and directed the film, came up with a great poster. I always wished that if they ever remade the film, I'd be the one to do it as I could kind of create the image on that poster." Wrynosiak got his wish, seated in the director's chair, he's helping Showtime's remake of *THE WASP WOMAN*, scheduled for a September broadcast on *ROGER CORMAN PRESENTS*.

The script adheres to the original film's Pasadena misadventure about corporate America wearing the publisher's piratocratic banger for youth and beauty. The face of former supermodel Janice Starlin (Jennifer Rubin) illustrates her cosmetic company's ads. But sales are de-



"It's enlightening. Why I said 'yes' to *WASP WOMAN* at all," says 26-year-old Jennifer Rubin. "I'm not scared to play it."

clining, and youth-conscious investors have a 19-year-old model (Maria Ford) to replace the forty-something Starlin. Also, the company photographer and Starlin's boyfriend, as less than compassionate, he's hot for the tempestuous Cindy Crawford wannabe. Starlin is contacted by a doctor (Daniel J. Travanti) who's developed a rejuvenation serum

from wasp hormones. Though the drug hasn't been tested on humans, a desperate Starlin volunteers for an injection. Sure enough, her youth and self-esteem are restored. Unfortunately, Starlin soon theorizes there may be a couple of side effects tagged to the doc's elixir; then again, these suspicions are founded only on her impulses to kill and open carcasses for her human quarry—humans. Then there's her inclination to sport winged appendages, mandibles and antennae.

Initially, Wrynosiak and producer Roger Corman split on their conflicting visions of the updated version. "Roger wanted almost a direct remake of the original," explains Wrynosiak. "and I wanted to go as far afield from the original as I could. So there was some creative controversy, and we went back and forth a bit but I think what we came up with is a really good script that plays to the original. He wanted a certain



WASP WOMAN

REMAKE OF B-FILM ADDS NEW WRINKLE TO TALE OF VANITY, VENGEANCE & A BIG BUG.

BY MICHAEL EDEY

"You could see the budget somewhere," recalls director Tasappa Curman. He's standing in a suburban basement in front of a blackboard. "Wasp Woman" obviously grew "20 years in the past," says Edey. "Wasp Woman" was produced as a document of the film scene up until a great point. I always wished that I could make the film. I like the idea of it, but I could find it so easy to make on that point." Curman got his first taste of the film scene in 1965, when he was 19, and he's been making films ever since. He's been making films for 20 years, and he's been making films for 20 years.



Curman's original idea for "Wasp Woman" was to make a film about a woman who was a wasp.

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Curman's original idea for "Wasp Woman" was to make a film about a woman who was a wasp.





"We made this monster look like a real woman," director of 1955's **WASP WOMAN** "I wanted to create what was the most beautiful [monster]... I said to my wife, 'Look, I want you Susan Cornell did her own stunts. Anne's is left Jennifer Rubin on Cornell's side."





thing, he wanted it to be almost a scene-for-scene remake of his original. I guess if I had a film that someone else was going to remake, I'd want to stay as close as possible to it. I also remake another of Roger's films, **NOT OF THIS EARTH**, back in '83 with Traci Lords, and I almost filmed it word for word, and now they've just relined it again." [Note: In Shoustikov's 1985 remake of **NOT OF THIS EARTH**, Elizabeth Berkner (FF 24) is her in the role played, in earlier versions, by Beverly Garland and Ms. Lords.]

Saban Entertainment, which co-produced **WASP WOMAN**, applied certain restrictions on casting; nevertheless, Wynorski and German contributed their own input. Besides, the director's primary reputation didn't involve high profile actors but, notes Wynorski, "how to make the monster cool. That was a 12-foot-long monster with wings, okay? How to film it, and make it look real, is a challenge because it had to move and for certain long shots, it required someone to sit on a saddle. It could move its legs, but it could not physically walk, but when it did move, we had to shoot it from odd angles so it appeared it could move, and it had to be puppeteered, because all the legs had to move. So you never really saw it move in wide shots, but you could see it in semi-close-ups. It looks pretty cool, though."

Immediately after production, Wynorski flew to Cannes. Upon his return to L.A., the director invites me to park myself in his editing room. "Didn't make a lot of money from **WASP WOMAN**," says Wynorski. "But sometimes you don't do everything for money. You do it for the love of the project, and I started with Roger. He started me on the road to success with my own company, Sarant Films. I always told him if he ever re-

WASP WOMAN (1986) German actress Marie Ford (**NAKED OBSSESSION**) as Jennifer Rubin's supermodel rival.

"I remade another of Corman's films, NOT OF THIS EARTH, back in '87 with Traci Lords. I almost filmed it word for word, and now they've redone it...again!"

made that picture to call me first, and he did. He said, 'Come on back and take a swing at it,' so I did and it was a fun experience to work with characters I'd seen as a kid.

"I've had that feeling once before with *NOT OF THIS EARTH*, but this was more of a difficult project because of the interior set and working in Bronson Cave [i.e. the Griffith Park location photographed for a profession of a-f program-mers, e.g. *IT CONQUERED THE WORLD*, *TEENAGE CAWEMAN*, etc.]. I wanted to work in all the good of 1950s places."

Wynaruk recounts that, "ages ago," he was initially hired as a director for Cineplex Odeon's *THE LOST EMPIRE* (1980). Cast of the "cliffhanger" spoof included Russ Meyer vet Raven De La Croix and the late Angela Amato. Stock footage from *OUR MAN FLINT* supplied the film with its vaunted finale. His reha-

quent job was helming Corman's production of *CHOPPING MALL*, which united a bevy of former *Female*, including Suzanne Slater (*FF* 1:4) and *RE-ANIMATOR*'s Barbara Crampton (*FF* 1:1).



But the director abridges his recollection of the 1986 release. "Oh, yeah, it was a fun film with robots. Since then, I've either produced, written or directed 50 films. I owe a lot to Roger. Now I'm going back to my own company to work on a film called *DEMOLITION HIGH*, which is kind of a *DIE HARD* in high school. I'm also doing *HARD BOUNTY II* and I'll proba-



The original *WASP WOMAN*, produced by Winkler, "was great to do as it says," recalls Roger Corman. "It looked like *Baroness* [below] (in Barbara Bares) gave a very nice performance considering the extent of the plot." Left: Corman's reply after age

bly produce the sequel to *SORCERESS*, which I directed last year. With a number of other films I'm producing, I've started my own little 'Corman cottage industry' with Sunset Films. I'm sort of doing the films only Roger would do, and I've been very successful at it."

Doug Wirt, the actor who portrays *THE WASP WOMAN*'s duplicitous boyfriend, drops by the office. "I did my character a little bit tongue-in-cheek," grins Wirt. "It's a fine line. You can't completely make fun of what you're doing, because then it doesn't work for the film. But you've got to respond to the fact there is this great wasp—we're talking about something that's a little implausible."

Jennifer Rubin's expository scenes introduce her as a middle-aged business woman, but Wirt's character is conspicuously more youthful. "I've done that before," relates Wirt. "I've played Connie Selleka's boyfriend on *PS, I LOVE YOU*. I've played Sharon Gless' boyfriend on *THE TRIALS OF ROSE O'NEILL*—so I've done the

older woman, younger man thing. It was interesting in this film because the character's dealing with someone who's very stable, who knows what she wants, knows who she is."

Wirt's track record for Corman includes five films. "There are certain drawbacks," he admits, "but over all, it's great. I've had the opportunity to shoot all over the world, including Moscow, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece and Romania. This was the first rule for Corman where I'm the straight leading man. The special effects guys did a really nice job with the creature, though who knows what the film's going to look like—you never do know until it's done. I'm classless, it could be a kind of quirky, dinky little film, or it could be really good. I like Jim Wynaruk, he's one of the most sure-footed directors I've worked with, so that was really fun. But I recently did a television series in Vancouver, where I thought I was doing great work. I really felt good every day I left the set, but I watched what the opt-

Continued on page 68

The three, they're (from l. to r.): Susan Crampton (seated below) as a baroness model in the original *WASP WOMAN* (in front into retirement when she turns thirty-something); in the remake, Jennifer Rubin's model is seated at age 41.



ELYNRA

continued from page 40

my own little make and everybody knows about me. I don't really have competition, when it comes to a spooky or horror job. Who ya gonna call? Elynra!"

"Strongly enough, my competition used to be Vincent Price. I couldn't ask for better company. I sound agonized, even putting myself in the same category with him because I love him so much. He was the person they would call first when they wanted somebody like that. Unfortunately, he passed away and many of his jobs came to me. I always thought Vincent Price had the best job in Hollywood. He didn't have to go out and look for work, he had his own make and nobody could beat him at it. He had a great life where he didn't have to work all the time, he could do his cooking, his art collecting—he had a life without having to scrounge around searching for work. I would count my lucky stars if I could have the same type of career as he did."

"He sure is blessing that I can go anywhere and not be recognized. I have friends who are celebrities and it makes doing anything, a real drag. People might say, 'How could being a star be a drag?' Well, let me tell you, that sort of thing gets real old."

Well, that wraps it up. Hope you liked my dialogue with Mr. Peterson. I think I did it right, what with this being my first interview and



1959, Terry Curtis had completed the intensive OPERATION PETRICCAT on life then spent about Janet Leigh's work recording her role in PSYCHO.

hopeful. Closing this profile, I realize that two things are inevitable. Number 1: Peterson's customary observations about fame notwithstanding, I still want Elynra's celebrity. Number 2: We can't give me the book! See ya, I'm outta here. □

WASP WOMAN

continued from page 40

come was and I hated what I was doing. I was the most disappointed I've ever been with my performance of mine. You'd think the older you get, the more you know what kind of work you're doing. In I could be really disappointed with WASP WOMAN, or pleasantly surprised. I'm

hopeful."

But all of these verbal pleasurables turned out to be the calm before the storm. A couple of days later, I met Jennifer Rubin. In addition to WASP WOMAN, she's made her share of genre films (NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET III, BAD DEBAMS, THE CHURCH). Rubin, however, graduated from B+player to insurrectionary actress. Indeed, she's the most outspoken female flake I've ever interviewed. Rubin is outrageous, but—in this specific case—we're not prying "outrageousness" on the Madison/phony-bollywood profile hamster. We're talking raw honest. Next issue. □

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J.J. North & Theresa Lynn.



LOUI SINGER

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being a part of that. Theater actor I played was very troubled and yet special." She also singles out the talent linked to her movies, including directors Herbert Ross (FOOT-LOOSE), John Schlesinger (THE FALCON and THE SNOWMAN), and Allen Rudolph (TROUBLE IN MIND). "I've just worked with really great actors, so it would be very hard for me to pick and choose. I've been very lucky and I've loved every second of it and I look forward to the next." □

JANET LEIGH

continued from page 41

turned-author. Leigh co-wrote PSYCHO. Behind the Scenes of the Classic Thriller, which debuted earlier this year (see page 42), Schilling wrote the fantasy novel Sacred Prey (FF 2.1), which earned new reviews. "Janet's very outgoing...very personable. And she looks great. Can't wait for her book," enthuses Schilling.

"Oh, Vivian," I interject. "Janet's Psyche book is already on the shelves."

"Yeah, I know," Schilling smiles. "I attended her book party at Universal's PSYCHO house. No, I'm referring to the novel she's been working on for the past five years. It'll be out in the fall. But you just interviewed her, and—and you didn't know that?"

"Oh, no, Vivian—not surprised, though, Janet's very versatile," I reply, trying to maintain my pride and composure. "Hey, can you name the film where Janet played Alena, Queen of the Dirty Isles? C'mon, I mean, everybody knows that!" □

DINOSAUR VALLEY GIRL

continued from page 40

a stripper who wants out of the business."

But damn, Ms. Dean, let's face facts, movie can't be judged on volume, and you're routinely barred to show a lot more than talent. "Hey, I admit that I've been exploited," she snaps back. "At times, the industry was so pretentious, I actually felt violated. It's gross—gross." But it's my trade-off to find a niche in the industry. Most starlets don't care about acting, but I do, sometimes to the point where I'm called temperamental.





Comes when a woman is shown? Mandy Leigh, literally is a show, twiddled the '90s (in SAT). The scene depicted. Directed by Bill Kunkel, producers in the '90s.

FEMALE ATTRACTIONS

In book form, it's a series of the country, including this year's San Diego Comic-Con. A sample of the anthology model is a full-size August for 1990's Vampirella calendar debut. September: Hanna premiere issue of Vampirella Jindas hits the newsstands (and she goes to her front cover). The anthology barely also passed for a full-up poster that will be released in the fall. And then there's her subset of Vampirella. Included in Topps' second series of Vampirella trading cards. But a certain FF reporter may soon purchase the mysterious model's shroud of secrecy. We'll keep you posted.

Video 'Vixens'

•Scotti Green, interviewed this issue, is hosting the Playboy (Charm) NIGHT CALLS: the premiere live installment of the talk show debuted on August 25th. He, Green—perceptive and very candid—is the ideal choice to dish up 60 minutes of chat.

•Theresa Lynn (VAMPIRE) VIA EMI: Prince (VNU) FF a 2) has signed as hostess of FOOTBALL FIVEQUEST, scheduled for 90 weeks. Lynn will review NFL plays on the cable news. □

FE MAIL

received from 7
photography. The encounter connects with the grid physically connecting the player. And there's The Party Girl, whose "subliminal abuse and woman sexuality and her predominant characterisation." But her favorite is a sympathetic on change with an explicit actress who tearfully relates her experience as a rape victim. These city dwellers react to your emotional responses.

One of artist Janette Janette's latest series, "Her woman poses on her own sexuality."



(players don't communicate with all stages but click on behavioral roles ranging from amiable to hostile). Our deadline precluded further exploration of the game's "Virtual Intimacy" but there are subplots involving a murder and the recovery of an alien artifact. For clues, check out the standup comic and the pre-processor. For further info, call (813) 482-4200.

Art/Comic Books

•We invite our readers to participate the renderings of Janette Janette. The artist applies a serious parallel to her former titles. Though each has a distinctive personality, Janette chooses certain parts of the figure to create movement and flow, which allows the viewer to feel the strength and energy of the figure. Poster illustrations are accessible through Mitchell Dees Inc. New York (2-800-847-4041), limited editions may be acquired from the Thomas Charles Gallery, Nevada (702-388-6000). Janette's original work is on exhibit at New York's Di Tull & David Gallery (212-234-1247). More explicitly exhibiting than conventional posters, her art has found a home in art of the.

•Check out the newsmagazine for Mad Science's Lady Justice and Gene Middleton's Lady Justice. Both Tekno Comics are hot, great, imaginary incredible art and the story lines are. Just a just may never underestimate the power of a woman.

Lady Justice is described as "a noble woman, talented, armed with magic and a sword and a sense of justice." A woman joined with her innermost self, focused only on her mission, a woman who cannot be deceived, cannot be fooled, a woman's mind will not be put to rest. Issue #2 offers Janette Farrell as the title character, who's escorted by her philosophical spirit guide to fight the misdeeds of evildoers. The August issue will introduce a new recruit Beauty, a Paganess heroine living in the violent gangland of East L.A. She carries her "blossom" although her head says for equality.

If you're hooked on STAR TREK, and those new "generations" of space travel, check out Star Trek: The Motion Picture. Last Summer is a comic book right up your alley. Middleton's trademark giant bending is perpetuated via artist engineer Howard (yes, there's a girl), and the villainous Lady Science. Check out the forthcoming issue for a special reveal. The Official Guide to the Planetary War, which chronicles data on Planetary War ships and equipment, there's also an abridged history and map of Planetary space.

Warrior of fact, Tekno Comics is preparing to launch a myriad of ad-

dvice-packed books. Leonard Hillman's Phosphorus, Neil Gaiman's The Graveyard Book, and Mr. Harry John Jameson's Empire. Mickey Spillane's Men Dances and more! You can call the Tekno Comics hotline (1-800-44-TEKNO) or drop a note on line (TEKNO@MIDCOM-07.COM), to chat with some of the artists and writers. If you really like Tekno, join the club, write to 2225 Glades Plaza, Suite 227 W, Boca Raton, FL 33431.

Trading Cards

•Comic Images has cornered the market, producing two exotic sets of trading cards per month. Glossy, high-quality cards are illustrated with the high-tech artwork of Tokyo artist Hajime Sorayama. The breeding and early Bora Velleo and the sexy-cute Gals. Appreciated for September, the artist's for September, the artist's for September, the artist's for September. Retail prices for most sets range from under a dollar to \$2.99.

•Earning a name may be the "shockwave" magazine of specialty trading cards. Lasting images is launching their latest creation "Shocking Pin-Ups" scheduled for early '91. The magazine offers "images of your favorite women in blurring (or naked) scenes from comic books. The flip side of each card is like a card with exciting, glamour shots, posed in studio." Among the play are John Oliver (J.J. North), Lolita McClellan, Limes Gagey, Barbara Leigh, Theresa Lynn and Mandy Leigh. Write to 120-A 83 Springdale Road, Suite #207, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002. □

J.J. North made the transition from 80 FT INTERLUDE to 60-FPM, her early interactive game debut in '91.



Femme Fatales



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